ABC of Awareness

Personal Development as the Meaning of Life

Jürg Rohrer

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The origins of this book

Jürg Rohrer, born in 1962, initially worked as an engineer in diverse companies at home and abroad. In 1991 he became professionally self-employed and since that time has worked with his own small enterprises in the areas of environmental technology and IT. The integration of the highest ethical values into everything we do or do not do is of central importance to him.

During his work the author constantly meets many people from different cultures in the most varied situations. This has encouraged him to consider the thought that whoever - over a period of time - critically observes himself and his fellow human beings in their everyday situations eventually cannot avoid the question as to the origins and meaning of our decisions and finally about the meaning of our human life. This book arose from these considerations.

It is often astonishing how little time we take to consider such an important theme as the meaning of our own lives. How easily we simply take over preconceived notions without questioning them. Or how seldom we thoroughly examine the consequences of our decisions in advance.

This book explains human development on the basis of easily-understood examples and simple models. It is intended to arouse thinking about your own life and to offer help as to how we can specifically change our lives.

Whoever reads this book will not gain great financial reward soon after reading it nor will he or she be venerated by his or her fellow human beings as «superhuman». However in this book the author does show ways of achieving a life full of meaning, inner peace and the joy of living. And this not as some kind of dropout from any sort of civilisation, but rather in the centre of daily life - and also not just in a special environment for a few weeks in the year but rather in the middle of our private and professional day-to-day lives as a completely normal human being.

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Foreword

What drives us as human beings? Why do we exist? What do we strive for? On the pages which follow we would like to offer subjects for thought and information on these and other questions. We set out the bases for all existence on the earth and discuss the consequences for life in private and business areas.

Amongst other things we describe how we can achieve constant harmony and inner peace. The right choice and deliberate pursuing of our own, self-selected goals take on a key role in this so that we can achieve our own goals and not let ourselves be manipulated by others.

The theme addressed here is extremely comprehensive. It is not sufficient to simply read a book on the subject. This contribution is therefore intended in particular to stimulate thoughts about our own lives, which goals we should set for ourselves in our lives and how best to achieve them.

For simplicity all the formulations have been written in the male form. This is not intended to be discriminatory, all conclusions and examples also apply without restriction to the female gender.

Mollis, February 2002

Jürg Rohrer

The needs of humankind

Why do most of us human beings go to work each day, why do we live with a partner, why do we have children? What are we trying to achieve in all of this? What indeed are we striving for? Is it merely to obtain food, to procreate, or do we want to purchase as many objects as possible, possess company shares, make careers for ourselves, go down in history, exercise power over others?

What are we striving for in our lives?

Much has already been written on the objectives and origins of human actions, we want here therefore to extract what we believe to be the most important of the different theories and to add our own thoughts to this.

In general it is assumed that in the final analysis all human beings have comparable needs. According to which of these needs have already been satisfied, according to age, the experiences of life and the culture, each person however sets his own priorities for the priorities which are still open in different ways. The best known here is probably the representation of these needs and priorities in the form of a Maslow pyramid (Maslow‘s needs pyramid). Maslow put forward the theory that human beings assign clear, hierarchical priorities to their individual needs. As soon as a person has reached a particular level in his own needs pyramid, the need to achieve the next higher level is aroused. As representative of the many other approaches to this theme we will take a brief look at the individual elements of this Maslow pyramid.

1. Human beings initially set their priorities according to their existential needs such as food, clothes and sleep. If the existential needs are not met survival is threatened and life itself is in danger.
2. If the existential needs are satisfied the need for safety is awakened: The desire for protection from the risks to life such as war, sickness, accident, environmental catastrophes etc. take centre ground.
3. The next level in the priority pyramid according to Maslow concerns the social needs: The human being wants to be with like-minded people, he wants to be accepted and loved.
4. The following level is concerned with self-regard and the esteem of other people: The human being wants to strengthen his self-confidence and for this purpose seeks regard and recognition from other people.

We all have very similar needs.

5. The top objective is the need for self-realization: The human being wants to be able to be himself and to permanently be able to experience inner peace, happiness and harmony.

As already indicated the needs of man have frequently been investigated and described, the needs pyramid can be refined, modified and supplemented at will. We can also – with good

justification – ask ourselves, whether for example the achievement of the third step is really a necessary precondition for the fourth or fifth steps. For our purposes it is not particularly meaningful to generalize the needs of man too strongly. In spite of this: Whoever observes human beings sees that in spite of their individuality the great majority of people set very similar priorities within a particular economic and cultural area. Very very similar indeed – the more we look at it.

However each person usually finds that his needs priorities change during the course of his life. Older people set many of their priorities differently from younger people. We don't want to go into the many types of human needs in any more detail. Astonishingly in virtually all investigations into the motives for human actions two great commonalities are found:

- Existential needs are the first priority.

  It is certainly clear that not only the human being but also in general every being upon the earth first of all seeks the resources necessary for survival, in particular food and an environment in which it is actually possible to live.

- The top priority level is that of inner harmony.

  The more the other human needs are satisfied the stronger is aroused the desire for a perpetual state of happiness, harmony, security, inner peace and calmness. Humans like to be themselves everywhere and at all times and at the same time wish to be fully accepted and to feel loved.

  In the end we are all searching for the same thing: Perpetual happiness, harmony and inner peace.

  Since this concerns an abstract idea of the quality of life this state is difficult to describe. Religions for example describe this as entry to heaven, the achievement of nirvana, a life of unconditional love, total peace on earth, breaking out of the cycle of reincarnation etc.

The highest objective of life is actually not so surprising. Once we accept that the needs described above are «somehow» attainable, must not such a state be glorious? Just imagine you are constantly in a state where nothing can worry you ever again, where you are completely satisfied and calm. You can feel love and radiate love. No sickness, no accidents, no quarrels, no cares, simply just harmony.

Surely this is worth striving for by everyone on earth? If you don't believe that this is attainable would it not be sensible to develop *in this direction*, to at least try to get as close as possible to this goal?

Advertising responds to our needs

In no other branch of industry are the needs of human beings so intensively investigated than in advertising. If it is known what the potential consumer group which purchases a given product or

service really strives for, where these people set their highest priorities, it is possible to respond exactly to these needs in the advertising and hence earn lots of money!

Advertising often speaks to our need for happiness and harmony.

The striving for harmony and happiness, for a life spent in love and peace is therefore frequently exploited in advertising: First we see a suffering person who has an affliction, an illness or a problem, then a product (pill, ointment, food, drink, car, washing powder, software, computer, telephone, holiday place etc.) and finally we see the same person who – thanks to the use of the product shown - is *happy*. Often too the happy person is shown together with the product. Just try sometime to deliberately observe how frequently the advertising messages are set up in this way regardless of the product on offer.

The suggestion is implanted in those watching that thanks to the use of this product you will be successful, beautiful, highly-regarded, rich or whatever – and this will (also) make you happy, your deepest longings will thereby be fulfilled.

Why does advertising promise us harmony and happiness? Why doesn't advertising simply tell us the facts of the matter, why do they appeal to our feelings and longings? The answer is obvious: In each person there is a longing for the highest goal, for perpetual harmony, for the constant state of happiness. This longing can also be exploited to maximise financial profits, to achieve power, yes - even to manipulate other people. We will come back in this chapter to discuss these goals again.

Substitute dealings

Many leisure activities are able to provide a feeling of happiness – but only for a very short time.

If we consider the effort which drives certain people to feel the abovementioned feeling of happiness, if only briefly, it becomes clear that many of us – probably for a long time - have been searching for ways of achieving perpetual inner harmony, that is the top level of our needs. Here is just a small selection of the ways which are undertaken:

- Overcoming the fear of death: People subject themselves to great danger in order to feel for a brief moment the indescribable feeling of happiness after surviving the situation. Thereby it is not usually very important whether this risk of death was objectively or only subjectively present. Examples of such activities are free climbing up a rock face (without safety gear), ski descents over vertical rock faces, diving into unknown water from a great height, white-water canoeing, boat trips over waterfalls, bungy-jumping, trips on certain types of ride in pleasure parks, as well as the playing of certain computer games.
- Achieving high performance levels: To be the first, the best, the fastest or the most beautiful, in whatever we have done or are still doing, also leads – at least for a short time – to a feeling of

happiness of the sort «I am the greatest or the best». In these activities the public often plays an important role. It is at best necessary to be able to see the respective person so as to be able to identify with him. In this way part of this brief feeling of happiness is also transferred to the spectators. Examples: Top sporting events of all kinds, Miss World or similar competitions, Guinness Book of Records etc.

As can be seen from the above examples, very many of us are – as a rule unconsciously – looking for ways of achieving personal harmony, the top step in the priority list of human needs. Something draws us, we want to «find ourselves», «experience something» often without really knowing ourselves what we mean by this.

Therefore the question is posed once again: What is your personal attitude to this: Would you like to have personal harmony, come close to a lasting feeling of love and happiness? Would you also like to be able to calmly accept all the influences and situations in your surroundings? Never get annoyed again and not have to put up with fears any longer?

If we deliberately plan for this goal, there must surely also be ways of getting close to it for a longer period than for just a few short seconds!

The observations in the next chapters should serve to discuss how we can bring this goal to reality and above all to show real possibilities for every one of us. It is entirely our own decision whether we strive for this goal and want to reach it or not. Nothing and no one can make us do this or prevent us from doing it!

The basis of our being

Sooner or later – and at the latest shortly before death – everyone will ponder about why we are here, what keeps life going on the earth, how life started, what happens after death, why a plant grows from a seed, whether there are other «inhabited» planets etc. Perhaps we will also concern ourselves with the future of the earth and pose the question of how the many and diverse problems on our planet can ever be solved.

In order – at least to a small extent - to be able to answer such questions, it is important to know what is the actual basis for our being. The answer to this question is astonishingly simple:

The basis of all life on our planet is the equal right of all beings to live here, to develop here and to carry out their tasks here.

Does this make you rub your eyes? Are you not astonished that it isn't a chemical formula or a physical process which is the basis of our being? Such processes are naturally an essential precondition for that which we call «life» on earth. The basis of our being however is significantly deeper. Let us therefore analyse this sentence step by step:

1. Every being on earth has the equal right to be here: Every person, every animal, every plant, every stone, every little pile of earth may be here. There are no individual people, plants or things which may not be here. There are no individual beings which are more important than the others – all are exactly as important as one another.
2. Every being has the equal right to develop. Every being may try to bring his personal goals, his needs to reality. There is no being, which has more right to a faster or a higher priority development than all the others. Nobody therefore may develop themselves at the expense of others.
3. Every being has the equal right to carry out his tasks. The „system earth" only functions as it does thanks to the interplay of all the inhabitants. In a large cycle all beings work «hand in hand». There is no reason why the tasks of one being should have priority over the tasks of other beings. All the tasks must be carried out so that «the earth» can function. All tasks are necessary, they are consequently all equally important or equally unimportant.

The above statement is a so-called cosmic law, i.e. a law which is always valid everywhere in the whole cosmos. All beings have to fit in with this rule no matter whether they wish to or not. In this book we will only concentrate however on the consequences of this basic rule for our system on earth.

All other *meaningful* laws on the earth must be compatible with this basic rule and may not violate it. In the following we will simply refer to this law as «the basic rights of existence».

The plausibility of the basic rights of existence

It is not possible for us as human beings to prove the validity of this law either by logic or certainly not by mathematics. It is simply true! Vice-versa however it is also not possible to prove that the basic rights of existence are not valid (which naturally also cannot be interpreted as *proof* of the validity). Especially in natural sciences and technology we have become accustomed to the fact that we cannot mathematically derive or prove the basic laws. It is true that we can test these basic laws by means of experiments – however this is certainly no real *proof* of their validity.

To examine the validity of the basic rules of existence we can also carry out certain experiments. We will go through such experiments in our thinking quite soon. Another test option for us as human beings is that each one of us tries for himself to feel whether the basic laws of being are valid. Since we too are part of the cosmos, this truth must be known to each of us. Through your intuition try to feel whether the abovementioned basic rights of existence are valid or not.

As already suggested the plausibility of the basic rights of existence can be tested by simple thought experiments. Let us «test» the three statements individually:

- Equal right to be on the earth for all beings

  Imagine that you are locked into a house with ten other people for a whole year. You have no contact with the outside world and for a whole year you only «know» these ten people. You must share everything: Living and sleeping areas, toilet, bath, shower, food, books etc. There is however sufficient space and also sufficient food for the whole year.

  If you wish to spend this year in peace and harmony is not mutual respect and mutual recognition of the right to exist of all eleven people an absolute precondition for this? The more people who refuse to do this the more difficult it will be to live together.

  Now let us expand this house in our thoughts to the whole earth and then add additional human beings, animals and plants. From this perspective the mutual recognition of the right of all beings to live on this earth is a plausible precondition for peace and harmony.

  The knowledge of all the inhabitants of the earth that their existence is respected, that they may be here, is an absolutely

essential precondition for harmony. Lasting peace can only come when no mutual threat is present.

- Equal right for all beings to develop

  No one can argue that today we are a fairly long way from a world of peace and harmony. Wars are taking place all the time and thousands of people die from hunger every day, while others are wallowing in abundance. Water, air and the soil are sometimes so badly contaminated that no beings can live there any longer or the food is inedible. To improve this situation further development of today's condition is necessary. Why then shouldn't a being not be allowed to develop or only be allowed to develop at a slower rate than others? Who is to decide who may develop further and who shouldn't?

  We are all at a certain point in our own personal development. Everyone wants to bring their own needs to reality. When there is competition for limited development space, there is automatically a conflict about who has the right to be the first to develop or who can develop the most. The *equal* right for all beings to personal development is therefore also a necessary precondition for lasting peace and harmony.

- Equal right for all beings to carry out their tasks

  The earth's system is extremely strongly networked. In this network each being (plants, animals, humans, minerals etc.) has many different tasks which it performs. In this networked system intelligence is distributed locally: Each being knows its tasks and objectives from its origin or its birth. There are no foolish beings which simply wait around until a «boss» distributes tasks to them. All of them bring with them the knowledge of their life's tasks right from their origin or birth, and they start to perform their tasks without external commands. However they do not need to know the tasks assigned to other living beings.

  The only «intelligence» which knows the interrelationship of *all* beings is the complete «earth system» itself, in other words the union of all beings on the earth. Since we humans only represent a tiny portion of this large system, it is plausible to suggest that humans will never be able to understand the tasks and functions of all the other beings and their interrelationships on the earth (Actually it would even be a great advance if human beings would discover and realize their own functions and tasks on this earth system...).

  If no being can understand alone all the interrelationships on the earth it is certainly not right for one being to presume to assign particular tasks to other beings or to prevent other beings from fulfilling their own tasks and certainly should not forbid them from doing them. It therefore seems appropriate that we should allow all beings the *equal* right to fulfil their tasks. In a localized, self-organized system such as the earth this is another

necessary precondition for the system to function at all and finally for harmony and peace to be permanently present.

We are used to making decisions with our intuition.

The points addressed above are indications, which are intended to arouse our thoughts on the basic rights of existence. As already mentioned there is no evidence for or against the validity of the basic rights of existence. Everyone must find out for himself whether he wants to believe in the validity or existence of these basic rights of existence or not. This can only be done via our intuition. Each of us is however quite used to trusting his own intuition in certain situations. Or how – for example – did you select your life partner? Did you arrange for scientific analyses, did you ask experts and then make a rational decision afterwards? How did you decide whether or not you would like to have children? How do you help your children in the selection of a career? How do you decide for or against a new job after an interview? There are always decisions in our lives which are strongly influenced by our intuition or are indeed only made on the basis of our intuition – however we are often not aware of this.

It is therefore left to you or your intuition to establish whether the basic rights of existence are in your opinion valid or not. Here they are again:

The basis of all life on our planet is the equal right of all beings to live here, to develop here and to carry out their tasks here.

In many works it is «unconditional love» which is described as the basis of all being, or of all being on the earth. Is this possibly wrong? – Of course not, unconditional love and the basic rights of existence describe the same thing. Whoever fully and completely respects the rights of all beings according to the basic rights of all beings – is showing unconditional love. Whoever unconditionally loves all beings on the earth will doubtless grant all beings the right to live here, to develop and to carry out their tasks. The term unconditional love and the basic rights of existence as described are therefore largely identical.

So let's return to the bases of our life on earth: From the right to live, to develop and to carry out our tasks as shown above are derived a whole series of additional rights and duties. In the hierarchical sense these laws are subordinate to the basic rights of existence.

Self-determination and self-responsibility follow on from the basic rights of existence.

For example from this results the *right to food* for all beings (otherwise their existence would be endangered, i.e. their right to be here would be violated), to *bodily and intellectual freedom* (otherwise their free development and/or their right to accomplish their tasks would be endangered), as well as the right to *self-determination* (otherwise free development would be endangered) for all beings. As a logical consequence of the right to self-determination the duty of *self-responsibility* is derived for all beings

(he who can freely establish for himself what he does or does not do is logically also responsible for all of his own decisions). We will come back to the subjects of self-determination and self-responsibility later.

It is almost simpler to derive certain non-permitted actions from the basic rights of existence. As a direct result of this, killing someone for example, is not permitted (such as by means of the death penalty, crime, war) or to prevent someone from having his own opinion (totalitarian regimes).

As is probably already clear from these few examples if we consider our everyday situations we soon come up against a conflict with the widespread views of our world. Is it for example permitted to intervene militarily in a country and thereby accept the killing of people so as to establish there the right to a life of freedom for the people? The answer is clearly: No.

From the basic rights of existence there comes neither a right nor certainly a duty for certain people to establish these basic rights on the earth! Because certain people have violated the basic rights of existence there is similarly no right for other people to establish them for other people – even if other human beings are being made to see «reason», i.e. being coerced into maintaining these rights! There is no justification in any of this for a «policeman of the world» with special rights!

The basic rights of existence are valid for ever and for everyone, there are no exceptions. All beings (people, plants, animals etc.) must live according to them and we should also naturally not violate them in order to establish them.

Following the rules of play of the system

The foregoing discussion calls in the question as to who then establishes this law if it «may» or must not be established by human beings. Who disciplines the «wrongdoers»? This question is all the more interesting because we all presumably violate this law several times a day. Let us leave open this question of a judge and consider what happens when a being violates this law:

In observing the needs of people we have seen that first we try to safeguard our physical existence and only at the highest level do we seek total happiness, self-fulfilment, internal harmony and peace - or whatever one may consider the highest objective of all. We can probably assume that there is an analogous needs hierarchy amongst animals and plants, in other words that they too aim for a state of total fulfilment.

Why fight against something which we cannot change?

Now comes a very decisive thought: Let's assume that we find ourselves within a system where certain rules exist which we cannot change. We also cannot leave this system and are simply there inside this system.

How can I have a feeling of well-being within such a system, in which I either follow the rules or resist them – but which I cannot change? Naturally I will only be able to feel good in this system if I follow its irreversible rules as rigorously as possible[1]. If I accept these rules, if I «play along» with them.

This really does make sense since we have of course made the assumption that we cannot change the rules. **Why therefore fight against something which we cannot change?** Lets look at this with the aid of two examples:

- If I wish to feel good in the «water system» as a human being, I must be able to follow the rules of water for better or worse. I am free to assert: «I can also breathe under water, I don't need to learn to swim.» When I actually breathe in the water, the consequent choking will sooner or later lead me to the realization that I must accept that I am subject to certain natural laws. I simply have to accept them and can for example learn to swim, then it will be much better for me in the water system!
- As our next example let's assume that I would like to feel joy and satisfaction in playing football. This is possible if I keep to the rules of football. If on the other hand I violate these rules, sooner or later I will be whistled back by the referee, maybe even sent off.

In every system there are natural laws and rules, which have been established by the creator of the system.

Inhabitants of the system cannot change these basic rules.

Its easy to find other examples. It is thereby quite clear that the respective rules must be followed if someone wishes to feel good within a given system.

The basic rights of existence behave in just the same way at a global level: If we want to have a feeling of well-being on the earth – if we wish to achieve lasting harmony and calmness, peace and happiness, we simply have to abide by the rules. The better we follow these rules the closer we will find ourselves to our objective.

This possibly leads us back to our original question as to whether the basic rights of existence are actually valid. As already indicated many times: You have to make this decision for yourself personally using your own intuition.

We can also ask ourselves the question whether the law upon which our earth system is based can, for example, be changed by us human beings in our favour. Here is a brief suggestion for thought on this:

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[1] By the *irreversible* rules, we mean those rules which form the basis of the system being considered and which must be obeyed by all inhabitants: In the earth system these are the basic rights of existence and the laws derived from this. This must never be confused with maintaining the laws which people have set up. We have of course drawn up these laws ourselves and consequently we can also change them at any time.

The rules governing a system are established by whoever founded the system or set it up. Whoever it was who created the earth system – it certainly wasn't us human beings since we didn't arrive until very late in the day! It would therefore be extremely contrary to believe that we can change the rules of the earth system ourselves.

Measured against the age of the earth and nature we human beings correspond with a baby which is still in nappies. Perhaps this comparison is not at all bad: Whoever has brought up children will certainly remember that the children in the family also want to dictate the rules of living together. During their upbringing however we force them to follow the rules of play which already exist: One eats from a plate, uses a knife and fork, dresses neatly when going out etc. Perhaps therefore the time has now come for us humans to accept the rules of play of the earth system – the basic rights of existence – and to attempt no longer to unsuccessfully try, like a child, to dictate the rules of the system.

Whoever still unshakeably believes that it is we human beings who determine or can change the foundation of existence on the earth system, must at least admit that our effect on the earth when looked at globally has so far not been very positive. The signs in fact point more to increasing problems in the future: So far we have not been able to stop environmental catastrophes, volcano eruptions, earthquakes, whirlwinds etc. any more than epidemics, sickness, hunger and war. On the contrary many of these things seem to be even worse!

Learning to live the basic rights of existence

From the above thoughts we can conclude that the desired state of harmony on the earth can only be achieved if the basic rights of existence are followed one hundred percent. The less frequently we violate the basic rights of existence, or the better we live a life of unconditional love, the closer we find ourselves to our highest of all goals, internal harmony as well as harmony with our environment. If other beings violate the basic rights of existence, this only influences us indirectly at the most. We can decide for ourselves whether we wish to respect the basic rights of existence in a given situation or not, therefore the achievement of lasting harmony for ourselves and for the environment depends entirely on us! It is entirely us alone who can control how quickly, or whether, we wish to achieve the highest objective of all people. We will come back to this in later chapters.

Whoever on earth wishes to find happiness, harmony and inner peace, he must observe the rules which apply in this system.

These are the basic rights of existence.

The development towards the top of the needs hierarchy can be imagined as a study course with lots of lessons. Every lesson thereby corresponds with a characteristic or a capability, which is necessary for respecting of the basic rights of existence. The more lessons which have been successfully completed, the closer a

being is to his goal and the greater is this being's capability of respecting the basic rights of existence. The objective can only be reached if *all* lessons have been successfully completed.

No path can get round the basic rights of existence. Life on earth gives every being every day innumerable possibilities of following these rights or of violating them. We will also discuss this subject in the next chapters.

Our life corresponds with a series of studies with the objective of respecting the basic rights of existence in every situation.

Now let's return to the question of the effects of a violation of the basic rights of existence: As soon as we commit a violation, the corresponding lesson is set back again to «pending» (if it has not already been set back). Apparently we still cannot master the capabilities taught in this lesson in every situation. As a result we will again have the opportunity to respond to the law in similar situations. In other words: Due to this violation of the basic rights of existence we will be able to repeat this lesson again sometime in the future. And indeed as often as we need until we can successfully conclude this lesson and there is no acute danger of a «relapse». Possibly it is also necessary or helpful, for this purpose, to feel the consequences of a given violation of the basic rights of existence by others on your own life and limb.

Violation of the basic rights of existence sooner or later leads to a repetition of the respective lesson – so that we can learn from it

Whoever keeps on making the same mistake will therefore stagnate in his own development. He gets no closer to the great objective of all beings and under certain circumstances he even gets further away from it, because this incorrect behaviour becomes habitual like an automatic mechanism. In our comparison with a series of studies this corresponds to a student who does not fulfil a necessary precondition for going up to the next level: He must wait until the corresponding lesson is offered the next time. Then he can go to this lesson and possibly complete it successfully. Otherwise he repeats the whole procedure time after time and makes no progress in his studies.

The repetition of individual lessons must not however be interpreted as a punishment in any way, but rather as help in learning. We would also not describe our schools as punishment for the ignorant student, but rather as a service or an aid so that young people can prepare themselves for an independent life.

In the same way it is also important to point out that concepts of cosmic punishment, as they are portrayed in certain religions or ideologies, (for example hell for bad people, bodily or mental suffering as punishment for earlier crimes etc.) are completely false interpretations. Through such punishments indeed the equality of rights for all human beings according to the basic rights of existence would be violated!

Another serious false interpretation has already led to the demise of many people: With every breath and every step that we take we influence other beings on this earth. It is therefore possible to draw from this the (false) conclusion that it would be better not to be here any longer and hence to commit suicide. This is of course

pure nonsense since here too we have a basic right to live, we may move, take food etc. There are beings on the earth (plants and animals), amongst whose tasks it may be to feed us as human beings. All beings have a right to life, to development and to the carrying out of their tasks – in this category belong also, but not exclusively, human beings.

Since a while ago we discussed a violation of the basic rights of existence, we would now for safety's sake mention once again the effect of following the basic rights of existence: The respective person will continue to develop personally. In time he finds peace within himself, becomes calmer and happier. Let's briefly summarize this again:

- Each enclosed system has certain irreversible rules of play, which must be followed by every participant. Whoever does not follow these rules will be corrected in one way or another.
- In the earth system this irreversible rule of play is «all beings have the equal right to live on the earth, to develop themselves and carry out their tasks ». We call this rule *the basic rights of existence*.
- All beings without exception must respect the basic rights of existence. For example the more consistently a human being „lives" the basic rights of existence, the closer he comes to his objective of perpetual harmony and peace within himself and his environment.
- Non-observance of the basic rights of existence leads to repetition of the respective lesson(s) and thereby slows down a being's development.
- The achievement of perpetual harmony, the highest objective of human needs, only depends on each individual person alone. No one can force a person to achieve this goal. In reverse it is also practically impossible to prevent someone from achieving this goal.

As already indicated we would like to show how this development actually happens in the next few sections.

The development of human beings

In the first chapter we saw that a human being strives for a state of total happiness, of perfection. An inner force drives him to do this as soon as the existential needs are secured. With the most diverse escapades, for example by accomplishing extreme physical performances, putting himself in great danger, tests of courage, drugs, certain spiritual rituals and activities, he succeeds in feeling this highest of all states for a given few moments. In reality however the human being is really seeking to experience this feeling of happiness and inner calm permanently afterwards.

Then in the second chapter we looked at the basic rights of existence as irreversible fundamental rules in our system and saw that the state of perpetual happiness is only possible through the deliberate respecting of the basic rights of existence. Most of us still violate these fundamental rules relatively frequently. To get closer to the state of harmony and inner peace to which we aspire, further development of our own personality is therefore necessary.

In this chapter we would now like to examine how this development can take place and how we can influence it ourselves.

The pyramid as a symbol of human development

We can compare a person‘s development, as has already been touched on, by using as a model the construction of a high pyramid. There are an astonishing number of common features:

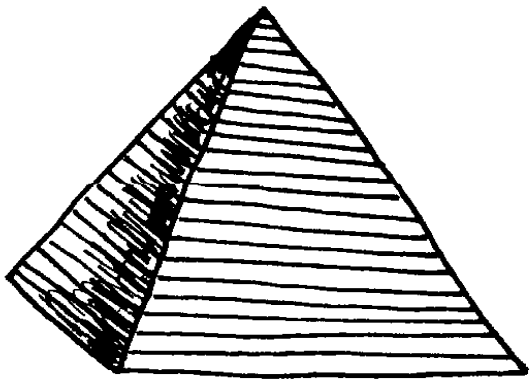


Figure 1: The pyramid of personal development

The pyramid represents the sense of harmony and unity within ourselves and with the environment to which we aspire. The individual building blocks of the pyramid are lessons we have already successfully completed, i.e. the ability we have already learned of how to live the basic rights of existence. As soon as the

top of the pyramid has been built to the necessary height and the whole structure has been cleanly rendered the highest goal can be said to have been reached: The respective person is then in perpetual harmony with himself and his environment.

With this pyramid model we can easily illustrate many of the features and requirements of human development:

- The pyramid is only complete when all the building blocks are in place.

  For the achievement of lasting harmony a person must successfully complete all the lessons of human development. No single lesson can be avoided, otherwise at the end certain abilities for living the basic rights of existence would be missing.

- When building a pyramid a certain sensible sequence of events must be maintained. The large stones can only be placed at the bottom. The foundation must be built before the top.

  Also in the case of human beings a certain sequence of events must be maintained. If someone overtaxes himself with tasks (for example trying to build the top before the foundation) or if he doesn't try hard enough (for example only ever working on the foundation of the pyramid) he will not develop further.

- If defects are found in the part of the pyramid, which has already been built (for example if stones fall out), these defects will sooner or later have to be repaired. According to the type and extent of the defects it may also be necessary to first remove stones above or beside the defective ones in order to repair them. In extreme cases it may even be necessary to remove all the stones above the defective ones. To prevent further damage the defect will possibly have to be repaired before building upwards can continue again.

  If the basic rights of existence in a given situation are not followed, the respective lesson of human development is again set to «pending» (the stone falls out of the pyramid). The person will have the opportunity at some stage in the future of learning again the respective characteristic or capability (repairing the pyramid). «Baggage from the past» i.e. the need to repeat waiting lessons prevent or impede further development.

- A pyramid, which is built symmetrically in layers (and not one-sided), is extremely stable even during its building. No earthquake can destroy it. Repairs to parts already built are seldom required and the builder can work efficiently on the construction of the pyramid.

  If we attempt to pursue our personal development in what is for us a sensible sequence, then the chances of violating the basic rights of existence in already tested situations is minimal. We

can devote ourselves to further development and not have to keep on repeating already-completed lessons.

- The higher the pyramid is built the greater the effort required to build it higher. The stones have to be carried further and further upwards. However the stones also become smaller all the time.
- Through the building of the upper layers the lower layers are subjected to greater and greater loads. Weak points are therefore automatically shown up and can be repaired. Through the pressure of the upper layers the lower layers also become solidified and therefore become stronger and can be loaded with more and more weight.
- A pyramid does not build itself. Whoever wants to build a pyramid must really want to do it and of course he must also do it. Just to speak about it or to draw plans is not sufficient!

  If a person wants to develop further he must want this for himself and then actually carry it out for himself. It does not happen automatically.

- The building of a pyramid requires a lot of time and patience. Often the building can take several generations depending on the size of the structure.

  Human development also requires time and can be spread over many incarnations.

We will return to many of the statements made here in more detail at later points.

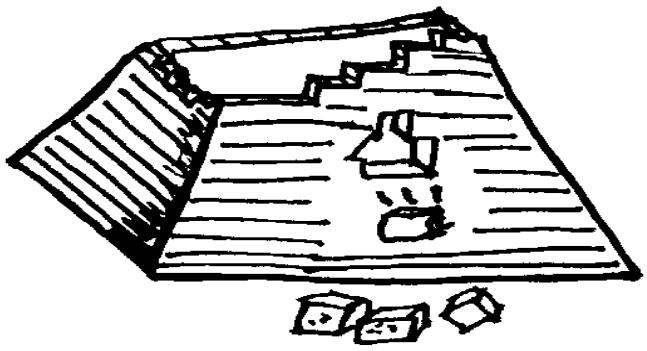


Figure 2: Partly built pyramid with a defect

Automatic mechanisms

In the previous section we compared human development with the building of a pyramid where each stone must be set in place one after the other. The question is therefore now posed as to how the

observance of the basic rights of existence can be practised in order to reach the desired state of total harmony and happiness as quickly as possible and in particular how to remain in this state. How do we build on our pyramid of personal development in the most efficient way possible? Can we attend courses on it or is special training offered?

The good news is: Yes; there are lots opportunities for such training, they do not cost money and are on offer always and at any time – these opportunities arise in nothing other than our daily life! In that we live, we automatically participate in such training. We will come back to this again below.

Our life is a training ground for respecting the basic rights of existence.

We have seen that the basic rights of existence must be *respected* in order to enter a *lasting* state of total harmony. It may therefore be tempting to try to isolate ourselves as far away from civilisation as possible so that we can live our lives alone without violating the basic rights of existence. However this would hardly be the most efficient method of developing ourselves further:

So that we can maintain the basic rights of existence in every situation, we should really «live» them, in other words to - as it were - «be» the basic rights of existence. It should not be difficult for us to follow the law in fact we should be able to follow it automatically. This automatic mechanism is unfortunately only partially natural to us, we can however develop it within us by practice.

Try comparing this with driving a car: The driver of a car moves the steering wheel automatically so as to stay in the correct traffic lane, just as he also automatically presses on the brake pedal with his foot in order to brake – or do you each time have to think when driving «I must turn the steering wheel clockwise a little so that I don't get onto the wrong traffic lane» or «now I must take my right foot off the accelerator pedal and put it on the brake pedal and then press with my foot»? This is a typical automatic mechanism, which we have acquired by practice. We do this automatically without having to think and, for example, we can simultaneously have a conversation with someone without any problem.

The deliberate observation of the basic rights of existence should become an automatic mechanism.

When learning to drive a car individual differences can be seen: Whilst some people initially have great difficulties with reversing or parking at the side of the road in narrow parking spaces, others have more difficulty in learning the meanings of traffic signals and converting them into automatic actions. If the will to learn the corresponding ability exists then success will eventually be forthcoming.

The characteristic in the example of driving a car is the fact that we can only acquire an automatic mechanism by deliberate practice (practice makes perfect). This is also true for very many other examples, such as skiing, speaking foreign languages, making music, singing, calculating, pairs dancing etc. Or have you ever

Abilities and automatic mechanisms can be acquired by practice.

tried to play a musical instrument without practice! – It is simply not possible.

It is just the same when it comes to respecting the basic rights of existence: It is only possible to learn the ability of how to observe the basic rights of existence in every situation, by deliberately practising it as frequently as possible. It is only when this has become an *automatic mechanism*, that we have achieved our objective.

Naturally it is also possible for the non-observance of the basic rights of existence to become an automatic mechanism. If in a given situation I always react incorrectly in the same way, then this incorrect reaction will also become automatic in time. Correction of this behaviour pattern will also be correspondingly more difficult and troublesome later!

However in that we avoid the practising of the basic rights of existence as far as possible it is true that we thereby prevent certain personal violations of the basic rights of existence, but we also do not learn to live them. We would be like a musician who no longer plays his musical instrument for fear of playing wrong notes. Exactly the opposite is true: The more frequently the musician practises, the lower the number of errors (such as wrong notes) he makes. A virtuoso musician will finally reach the stage where he virtually fuses with his instrument, without having to make any effort he simply plays it. He certainly has no concerns about playing wrong notes: He has full mastery of the instrument, therefore it too will not produce any wrong notes.

The virtuoso in the element

There is yet another explanation as to why the basic rights of existence really have to be lived and that it is insufficient to simply not violate this law:

If we always have to watch out that we don't violate the basic rights of existence in order to reach the permanent state of total harmony, we live in continual fear that we will violate the law in spite of trying not to. This would be a negative form of motivation: I learn swimming so that I don't drown; I take part in a dancing course so that I don't step on my dancing partner's toes; I practise a musical instrument, so that I don't produce wrong notes etc.

Will someone who learns to swim so that he doesn't drown be able to fully enjoy swimming? Surely he will never feel happy but will always be battling against the fear of drowning. Will someone who only practises his musical instrument for fear of making wrong notes ever be a virtuoso musician? Almost certainly not. Fear has a counterproductive effect and cannot lead to enjoyment and fulfilment.

Virtuosity in an activity is only possible if someone „fuses" into this activity, «is» the activity himself.

It is therefore certainly reasonable that in order to achieve the permanent state of total harmony it is necessary to live the basic

rights of existence, to acquire an automatic mechanism, so that the law is automatically followed or even lived without the need for any thought about it. Just like a musician who fuses with his instrument and therefore can give a concert in a state of enjoyment and fulfilment.

To be able to feel happy, to feel he is in his element is only possible if that person is «one» with his corresponding activity, or if he is «wrapped up in it». This is only possible in the long term if we have internalized all the laws of the corresponding activity and know how to deal with them. Each person must have the certainty himself that he can master this activity like a virtuoso in every situation. In that this activity concerns the living of our own life, these laws are the basic rights of existence.

Training camp

Returning to the question put at the outset as to how the respect for the basic rights of existence can best be learned. Actually we are all ready to practise this – however we are not normally aware of it. Let us therefore consider the development of human beings:

In our everyday life we are confronted with many situations in which we can observe or violate the basic rights of existence and the resulting laws. It is not necessary to look very far for such situations, every action, even every thought offers us this opportunity: What shall we buy, how do we cook, how do we treat our fellow human beings (partner, children, colleagues, boss), how do we treat animals and plants, nature etc.

Our life is a training camp for further education.

We can imagine our life as a sort of training camp, a school or a university. Before our birth we resolved to acquire certain capabilities for the consistent living of the basic rights of existence, which we still lack, in this training camp. We select the best-suited environment for this purpose and are born (incarnated). The selected environment will include for example our parents, brothers and sisters, the geographical area, our fellow human beings etc. These are indirectly our trainers and sparring partners. After our birth it is our responsibility to use the training opportunities and to develop the abilities we are striving for. Nothing and no one forces us to do this. By «coincidence» we keep finding ourselves in situations, which are intended to permit us to learn the abilities we are striving for (see below). This is our training camp.

Incarnation and reincarnation.

After our death the situation is reassessed and the preparations are made for the next training camp, for our next reincarnation[2].

[2] Neither the existence nor the non-existence of reincarnation can be scientifically proved. In making this judgement we are left to our own knowledge, to our inner feelings and our intuition. He who really cannot accept the concept of reincarnation, can perhaps

Through this cycle of birth and rebirth the highest of all goals – total harmony with ourselves and the world, can be achieved step by step. He who intensively and deliberately uses the opportunity in the training camp, that is - in our daily life, will inevitably make faster progress than someone who does not concern himself with this training.

Let's compare this with sport: Assuming we want to improve our stamina and decide to take part in a training camp which is matched to our actual abilities. We look to see who else is attending this camp (perhaps we ask a few friends whether they would like to come along), we then select a camp and eventually we go along. According to the type of camp we have selected we can go running in the open country or on artificial tracks, cycle, walk, climb, swim or whatever. If we profit from this opportunity our sporting stamina will certainly be improved over time. If however we don't take this opportunity our stamina will not be improved and perhaps even get worse.

If we behave even more extremely and disturb the other participants - for example by creating noise in the accommodation at night – then the others will not be able to achieve such good training results as they would have been able to without our participation!

It is entirely our responsibility as to whether we achieve personal advancement or regression, or even whether we prevent others from achieving their goals!

Personal development towards total harmony is naturally possible in various different ways. There is no specified sequence or time-table of lessons such as is found at school.

According to the basic rights of existence every being is given amongst other things the opportunity and the freedom to develop personally. Therefore each being can choose for himself his personal path and the appropriate speed. It is only the full scope of the learning – to live the basic rights of existence - which is the same for everyone.

We can freely choose our own objectives for living.

The right of self-determination for all beings thereby applies to the extent that each – according to his free judgement - can also strive for other goals in his life, for example for financial riches, fame, power over others, sex, popularity etc. Apart from our own internal drive for the search for permanent harmony and peace, there is no force which forces us to live the basic rights of existence. Our free will is respected. However we must also live with the consequences of this choice.

As in the learning of all abilities (for example performing music, sport etc.) it is only possible to acquire the corresponding

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accept as a compromise that we hand on our unsolved problems to our descendants. What we do not achieve in our own lifetime our descendants must consequently solve.

automatic mechanisms and characteristics step by step. In the same way that it is not sufficient to read a book about playing the violin in order to learn how to play it, it is also insufficient to read a book about the basic rights of existence in order to actually live this law. «Practice makes perfect» is just as valid here as elsewhere! A good training plan can however significantly improve the efficiency of learning and help to make it more enjoyable. A balanced dose of challenges and intermediate successes is tremendously important to be able to achieve rapid and permanent learning progress. Neither tasks which are too demanding nor those which are continuously insufficiently demanding will get us any further. If in our thoughts we are conscious of the fact that we want to live the basic rights of existence, we will automatically follow our own optimal training plan. We will refer again later, when studying our responsibilities in the adoption of tasks to the importance of solving tasks of the difficulty which match our personal development status and to the need to honestly assess our capabilities.

He who grasps the many opportunities in life as personal chances and courageously tries to live the basic rights of existence in every situation will be able to make great progress. Over several incarnations he will get ever closer to the objective of all living beings, the highest level in the needs hierarchy, and will finally reach his personal goal.

Before every important decision we should therefore ask ourselves what this will mean for us. Not with respect to finances, prestige, power and so on *but with respect to our personal development*. «Can I on the basis of this activity further develop or practice my ability to live the basic rights of existence?» is a decisive question when we take on tasks. Whoever takes such questions on board and does not shy away from drawing the corresponding consequences from the answers will soon be carrying out tasks in which he can optimally develop.

Learning thanks to subjective perception

We have so far mentioned many times that we are confronted «by life» with situations which permit us to learn the ability to live the basic rights of existence. If for example we are to learn to let things go, then we are constantly put into situations where we have to decide whether we want to cling on to something or let it go. In reality these things could be for example articles, money, dear friends or relations, or the results of current or earlier activities. It is in no way necessary for us to know ourselves on which lesson we are currently working. «Life» already knows!

How does this learning process function? How does «life» know with what it should confront us for our development? We will investigate these questions more in the following sections.

Objectivity and subjectivity

Let's first turn to the question of objectivity: How objective is our perception in reality? A statement is objective if it is neutral and not influenced by prejudices, feelings and interests. An objective statement is consequently independent of the person who makes this statement. The objective statement corresponds with the facts. We often tend to view our own perception of things or events as objectively correct. What others think of the same events or things we frequently categorize as incorrect or subjective.

What is «good weather»?

A good example is the weather: Two weeks of sunshine, high temperatures and no rain for many people is seen as desirable and good. The farmer however would like some rain in between times because otherwise his fields dry out, older people are not so happy with high air temperatures because it causes breathing difficulties etc. Who is being objective here? Obviously our assessment of the weather depends amongst other things significantly on what we want to do (swimming in an outdoor pool, working in the field, working in an office, travelling, resting etc.), upon our mood and our state of health. Exactly the same weather on a given day gives one person great pleasure and another one annoyance. But even within ourselves the assessment depends strongly on our plans: If we are working in an office three successive days of rain normally would not bother us too much. If however we are on a beach holiday we would want other weather!

We largely influence our perception ourselves as to whether we find the weather «good» or «bad». No one forces us for example to feel that hot summer weather is «bad». We are free to choose whether this is good or bad in our own eyes. Each of us has certain individual claims on the weather today or tomorrow. According to what the weather is really like will we be more or less satisfied.

Just imagine how much trouble there would be if human beings could actually control the weather! Presumably you will agree that in our judgement of the weather there is no objectivity. Every opinion is correct, but every opinion is also subjective.

Our perception depends on our distance from an event.

Let's look at the question of the objectivity of our perception in another example: We will examine personal relationships between people and in particular here the relationship between man and woman. Most of us have probably already experienced more than once the end of a love affair: If it was not you but your partner who ended the relationship, with great probability you will have seen the end of the relationship at the time as being awful, unjust and wrong. Weeks, months or at least years afterwards people normally feel that the end of that relationship was a good thing. They are presumably happy about it because completely different options opened up for them.

What happened in the meantime? The event is still the same: Our partner left us. If we no longer judge this to be awful and unjust,

but instead sensible and good, it must be we ourselves who have changed. Our perception of the same event reflects this change. Just like our example of the weather our perception with respect to personal relationships is also subjective.

In the course of our personal development our perception changes. It is however true that no one can force us to develop ourselves further. If for example we want to be miserable for the whole of our life because of the end of a relationship, we can do so. The decision is ours alone and not that of our neighbourhood for example, or our previous partner!

We could still give pages of examples of such situations and events which we only perceive subjectively. It is therefore possible to put the opposite question as to whether we human beings *can* perceive things or events objectively at all!

The most obvious fields to consider here are those of science and/or technology. In these fields we can define a respective partial system and then establish the relevant laws in this partial system according to our current knowledge. Within this partial system and under the defined preconditions we can then make «objective» measurements and observations. As soon as we leave this partial system however it loses its objectivity since there the preconditions are no longer conclusively valid. It is only when we know *and understand* everything on the earth and in the cosmos, that objectively correct observations are theoretically possible. However we are still a long way from this...

- Before it was found that the earth was round it was assumed to be a disc. All the navigational calculations for ships for example were based on this assumption. Pity those who took no notice of this assumption.
- Before the discovery of the theory of relativity the corresponding calculations were made without the use of this theory. There was lots of evidence that the existing theory was correct and complete. No one said: «Stop, the theory of relativity is still missing».
- The model of the structure and properties of an atom has drastically changed in the last fifty years. Many times the scientists were convinced that we now know «everything» about the structure and properties of the atom.

Our perception is subjective.

We have tried to illustrate with these three examples that our knowledge is constantly expanding. Those things which we recognize as good and correct in science and technology today, can be proven in the future to be incorrect or incomplete on the basis of new findings. Looked at from the viewpoint of the whole «earth system», our perception within the scope of our science and technology is therefore also subjective.

Without wanting to interpret the above examples and elucidations as evidence, we therefore venture to make the statement that our perception of everything around us is purely subjective.

The glasses model

The nice thing about subjectivity is the possibility of influencing the situation ourselves. If my perception is subjective then I – and I alone – have all the options of influencing or being influenced in a given situation. I alone decide whether I feel that something is good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, cold or hot, beautiful or ugly!

We can perceive the same event quite differently – just like through different glasses.

We do not see our environment and the events around us as «objective» or neutral. Instead it is rather like looking through a pair of glasses, which determines our interpretation of a picture. I hold these glasses myself in front of my eyes. According to the way these glasses change what is really a neutral picture of an event, the picture makes us feel for example fear, joy, anger or it makes us sad. We feel the picture to be good or bad, negative or positive, meaningful or senseless, dark or light, correct or false.

If we assume that this subjective influencing of the neutral picture happens in our subconscious, we can imagine there is a large collection of different pairs of glasses there. According to which pair of glasses is held in front of us by our subconscious state, we interpret the picture in a different way which then moves us for example to feel fear, anger, consternation, apathy, joy or sadness. Our perception is determined by the respective glasses.

Surely you have also noticed how a film can one day make you laugh and on another day and under different conditions you don‘t find the same scene funny at all. The scene is naturally exactly the same – it is your mood which has however changed, and therefore you interpret it differently. You have put on another pair of glasses.

We control our perception ourselves.

It is very important - and also comforting – to see that our perception is *not* controlled externally. The subconscious is part of us, therefore we can influence it. We can also however allow it to be influenced by external forces. We will come back to this later.

What however has this digression into subjective perception got to do with personal development towards living the basic rights of existence? We set ourselves the question at the start as to how life confronts us with the respectively appropriate situations so that we can develop ourselves further.

One such opportunity is subjective perception: If we wish to develop ourselves further towards living the basic rights of existence, if we strive for perpetual internal harmony, then our subconscious can hold up the «correct» glasses for every situation. These «correct» glasses allow us then to perceive a given situation so that we can learn something from it – insofar as we wish to. In this way every situation finally offers us the chance

of learning something. In absolutely identical situations different people can at the same time train themselves in quite different characteristics! The subconscious holds up the appropriate glasses for each person so that he interprets the situation accordingly.

Thanks to the «glasses» quite different abilities can be learned in the same situation.

At the start of this section we mentioned as an example the «ability to let go» as a possible learning step. If someone works on this learning step a lot of things will be «taken away» from him in his life: Perhaps his children will move away to a foreign country, many acquaintances will go away, he may even be made redundant by his employerer, although he wanted to stay until he retired, perhaps he loses a valuable clock, his case is stolen, someone else gets the credit for part of his work etc. Naturally these are all everyday things which can happen in everyone‘s life and they are not in the least spectacular. With the glasses through which he observes these happenings he will classify each of the enumerated events himself as tremendously tragic and will presumably suffer greatly because of them. Until one day he has learned, of his own free will, to let them go. Similar things will thereafter still happen, but he will feel quite different about them since he is now looking through other glasses.

This is not all about always wearing rose-coloured glasses, so that everything is felt to be «good». It is of course possible to be tempted to outwit our subconscious by some kind of technique so that we see everything through rose-coloured glasses. However in the end we would be deceiving ourselves to the extent that we would be fighting the symptoms and not the causes.

He who is in harmony with himself does not judge.

It is much more sensible each time to observe ourselves and ask ourselves why we have felt a given situation in this way and why we have reacted in this way. This question is particularly important if (negative) emotions are linked with our reaction! Fundamentally however we can learn something from every reaction we make, as long as we establish that we *judge*. We can then work consciously on the causes of this and thereby develop ourselves further. Finally the corresponding glasses will «disappear» so that in future we will react differently to similar situations.

Earlier we have described how the objective of all human beings is to live the basic rights of existence in every situation in order to attain a permanent state of harmony within ourselves. With the «glasses model» and subjective perception we could also describe this as a state in which our perception is no longer impaired by glasses, in which we no longer judge but we can accept everything calmly as it is.

Joy, inner peace and harmony also mean calmness.

This parallelity should not surprise anyone: If my mood and my behaviour can no longer be influenced by external things – in other words no more glasses leading to the judgement of a situation, then I can be in a state of permanent peace and harmony with myself. Otherwise this harmony would be constantly spoiled by the judgement of all kinds of events.

This once again makes it clear just how high is this goal of permanent harmony with oneself and the non-judgement of everyday situations in deed and in truth: Each of us indeed has his weaknesses which can easily disconcert us. These can often be such banal things as a car driver behind us who hoots and flashes his headlights or makes an «explicit» sign to us with his finger. Your child which does exactly the same thing which you have strictly forbidden him to do two minutes before with the threat of punishment. A third person who spreads lies about you in the neighbourhood or at the workplace. A computer which crashes for the n^{th} time without any obvious reason etc.

We must emphasize once again however that this calmness must not be confused with the wearing of rose-coloured glasses which allows everything to appear cheerful and good. The rose-coloured glasses would also be a judgement which - it is true - would normally appear to us to be pleasant. However we would then judge everything in life to be good and go through life like a lunatic with a fixed smile.

The glasses of perception can also be taken over from others.

A great risk in connection with this is also the taking on of other people's glasses: We frequently allow others to influence our perception or even determine it. Such people may be our parents, teachers, friends, partner and organisations, but we may also be influenced by newspapers, magazines, the Internet, radio, television, films, adverts and much more. Certainly in the case of the media, which frequently quite deliberately tries to manipulate our perception, we should be careful not to accept the judgement of the reality by a third party. The decision as to whether we permit such influence or not is ours alone.

To illustrate this let's consider a war which is perpetrated in a foreign land by one or more nations, for example «on behalf of UNO». The Government in the country being attacked (often one individual person) is branded as a symbol of everything which is wicked and bad. Attempts are made to legitimize the violation of the basic rights of existence by military intervention in the foreign country. If we accept this judgement we are producing for ourselves a pair of glasses which conveys exactly this picture.

Nothing and no one can force us to allow ourselves to be influenced from external sources. If we do allow it, it is of our own free will. As a consequence of this however we must normally accept that there will be backward steps in our personal development. For at some stage we will have to also let go of every pair of glasses which we have acquired or taken on. The acceptance of judgements by others or allowing them to influence us therefore creates more work on our path to a permanently well-balanced nature and to living the basic rights of existence in every situation. Thereby it is of absolutely no importance from where we take on such judgements: For example whether we accept them from advertising or from a religious leader, it is exactly the same for our own development!

Subjective perception is a very powerful aid to personal development. So that it can function properly it needs only one – but very important - precondition: Of our own volition and without conditions we must *want* to respect the basic rights of existence in every situation. This development does not take place of its own accord.

Objectives

Sooner or later the question arises as to why we «must» influence our subconscious in order to develop permanent harmony within ourselves. Why «must» we ourselves want this development so that it takes place? If this goal is somehow «somewhere» within us then why doesn't this development automatically take place towards this goal without our having to do anything and without effort!

We can do or not do what we want for ourselves.

The answer to these objections can more or less be found in the goal itself: According to the basic rights of existence each living being has the equal right to live here, to develop and to carry out its tasks. Each can decide for himself toward which goal he wants to develop. No one forces us to live the basic rights of existence, or to strive for our own internal perpetual harmony. We can do what we want or not – however we must also live with the consequences of our decisions.

We can also represent this using the two models for human development discussed earlier:

- No one forces us to build our own pyramid of personal development. We can also dig holes or do nothing. It is just that in this way we will never achieve the highest objective.
- No one forces us to stop wearing our glasses of subjective perception. We can continue to apply our judgements or even put on additional glasses. It is just that in this way again we will never achieve the highest objective.

Our free will will be respected in any event. Development within the sense of the basic rights of existence will only take place if we want it. We normally express this will by our objectives. We will therefore deal in more detail with the setting and achievement of objectives in the following sections.

Definition of objectives

When we talk about an objective or a goal we mean a state which we would like to achieve in the future. The term state is however interpreted here extremely comprehensively, for example to have emigrated within 10 years to a particular country, to have

successfully completed a particular educational course, to have a family with children, to gain certain abilities etc.

In terms of pictures we describe an objective as, *where* we want to be at a particular time. On the other hand the path to this goal, that is how we wish to achieve this goal as well as the necessary negotiations and decisions, is not a component part of the objective itself.

Partial objectives

The further we are from a given goal the more abstract this goal appears to us. We can only imagine with relative difficulty what it must be like when the goal is achieved. It is also correspondingly impossible to plan in detail how we wish to achieve this goal. In such cases it makes sense initially to strive for partial goals, which can be brought to reality more quickly and therefore appear to be more practically attainable. These partial goals can lead us like signposts to the greater goal. In doing so it is entirely possible that we do not reach the greater goal by the most direct route but take certain diversions.

We can compare this with travelling to a far-away destination: If I wish to travel by car from Zürich to Warsaw, I first of all establish on an outline map the stopover points of my journey. There are naturally many ways of getting to Warsaw from Zürich by car. Whether I travel via Germany or Austria is thereby not important. I simply decide on a particular route and then set off.

If on the other hand I wish to travel to Warsaw from Zürich on foot then this venture would take several weeks, and because of the many influences which are still unknown at present, it is very difficult to plan in detail. I will therefore generally establish the route and then make concrete plans in advance for two-three days at a time. Under way I will meet lots of other people who will be able to offer suggestions for particularly attractive routes. In addition my physical state will also have a great influence on the plans. With the relatively late fine planning I will remain flexible and easily be able to adapt my route to the changed situation.

This procedure is obviously certainly not revolutionary but it has proved to be valuable over many years in business life. The long term objectives are initially set up as goals for the next twelve months. To achieve these goals we then split this year further down into quarters, months and weeks. It is only the short term objectives which are planned in detail each time.

Compatibility of objectives

In the above example we have already indicated that there are many different ways of travelling from Zürich to Warsaw. The closer I get to Warsaw however the more I have to watch out: If for

example I take a wrong turning to the east 2 km south of Warsaw, my distance from Warsaw will soon become greater again. I get further from my goal again instead of getting closer to it. Suddenly I am twice the distance from it than I was before!

We therefore distinguish between partial goals, which bring us closer to a goal, and those which take us in another direction. If we aim for a partial goal, which leads us further away from the greater goal, then we are in the process of making a diversion. This still does not mean however that because of this we will not reach the goal.

We describe therefore all the partial goals, which bring us closer to a greater goal as *compatible goals*. The faster a partial goal brings us to the greater goal, the more compatible is this partial goal with the greater goal. If we want to achieve a goal as quickly as possible the targeted partial goals should therefore be as compatible as possible with the ultimate goal.

Compatible goals bring us closer to the same greater goal.

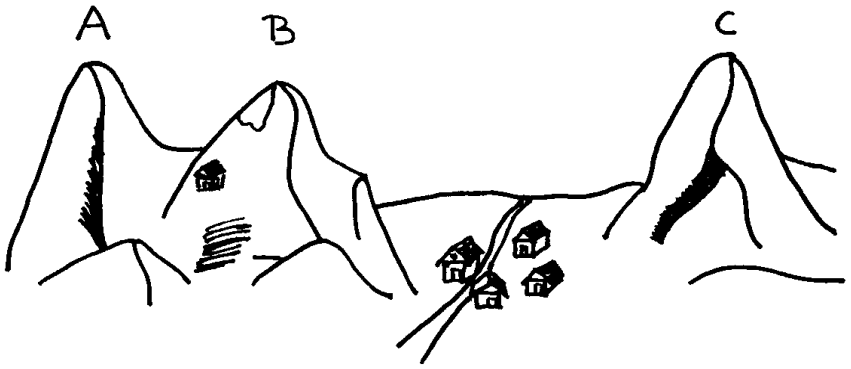


Figure 3: Village with mountains A, B and C

In the above figure the mountain peaks A, B and C represent objectives. Mountains A and B are on the same side of the valley, the path first leads to the mountain hut and then separates relatively soon after this. C is on the opposite side of the valley. As we travel towards the village in the valley we get closer to all three mountain peaks, these three peaks are therefore still compatible with one another. In the village we then have to decide on either mountain peaks A and B or peak C. As soon as we climb the side of the valley leading to C we get increasingly further away from A and B. The objective C is now no longer compatible with A and B. We can no longer simultaneously get closer to all three goals.

If we decide to climb up towards the mountain hut, then we get further and further away from goal C, but we do get closer to A and B. Until we get to the mountain ridge behind the hut, objectives A and B are still compatible with one another. At the fork however we have to make a decision: If we approach peak A then we get further from peak B and vice versa. After this fork the objectives A and B are no longer compatible.

The fastest route to the goal depends upon us alone.

In the final climb to peak B (see Figure 4) there is an ice field ①. With the right equipment we can cross this field and thus stay on the direct path to the peak. If we don't have ice equipment we can make a detour around this tongue of ice on the path marked. It is true that this is a diversion but if we don't have ice equipment it will bring us faster to the peak than if we tried to cross the ice. Both routes in the final climb to peak B are compatible with the greater goal. According to our equipment the route over the ice or on the detour around the ice field is the more compatible since it gets us more quickly to the ultimate goal.

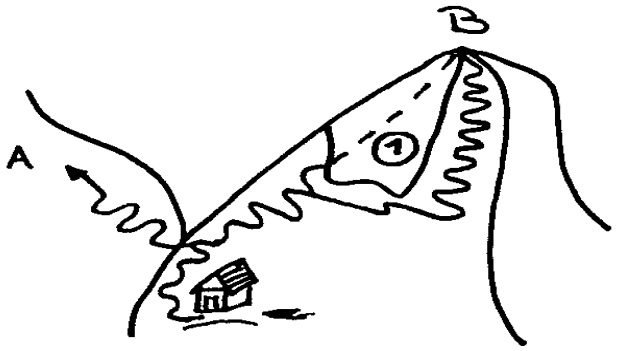


Figure 4: The climb to peak B after the mountain hut

This example should serve to show that the compatibility of our objectives also depends on our location on the route to that objective. In order to really achieve a goal the selection of compatible goals is that much more important the closer we get to our goal. In the section on concentrating our strengths we will come back to this. In addition this example shows that the choice of the optimum route to an objective is very individual. It strongly depends on our own capabilities and experiences (in the above example this is represented by the ice equipment).

Pursuing different types of objectives

We can naturally pursue several greater objectives. No one forbids us for example from striving for both great financial wealth as well as from living the basic rights of existence. Whether these two goals are compatible with one another depends on the state of our personal development. The closer we get to the goal of permanent harmony the greater the chance that these two goals are not compatible for us. As we have already emphasized many times, we can select our goals for ourselves, but we also have to live with the consequences. The more incompatible are the goals we pursue the more strictly we have to divide our time and energy. Correspondingly the possible progress becomes fundamentally less with the increasing number of incompatible goals. In extreme cases we divide our energies to such an extent that no progress at all is possible – we stay in one place.

Let's consider in the example of Figure 3, with the mountain peaks A, B and C as goals, someone who wants to reach goal A as well as C. Let's assume that this person pursues goal A for one hour and then pursues goal C for one hour, then A again and so on.

The pursuing of non-compatible goals sooner or later leads to a standstill in development.

As long as this person has not yet reached the village in the valley he makes good progress since both goals are compatible with one another. From hour to hour he gets closer to the village. However as soon as he reaches the village he will climb for one hour towards C and then for one hour towards A. This however is exactly the opposite path to which he has previously travelled. This person therefore returns to the village. He then decides again on the peak C and turns around …etc.

No matter how persistent this person is, he constantly shuttles backwards and forwards close to the village without ever getting closer to either of the two goals. He might just as well sit down and rest – instead of which he chases around and gets tired at the same time! He wastes his energy and achieves nothing. He makes no further progress.

Our behaviour in a given situation is determined by our current goal.

When making a decision we select *one* objective each time as a guideline for this decision. Our behaviour in a given situation is primarily determined by our current objective. In the example with the mountain peaks the person decides initially for example on goal C. In the next decision however we can already select again another goal as a guiding principle - in the above example the goal A. The currently-valid goal can therefore very quickly change.

If we pursue several objectives which do not complement one another – in other words are not compatible, then there is a permanent sort of competition between the individual objectives as to which objective can now have the upper hand and hence become the guiding principle for the current decisions.

Let's assume you would like to be your boss's deputy, although amongst your work colleagues there are more suitable people. At the same time you want to have a fair and friendly relationship with your work colleagues. As soon as your boss appears you will behave differently because you want to show him that you would be the best deputy for him. When the boss is not around the objective «good relationship with work colleagues» has the upper hand. As soon as the boss comes in again the current objective changes to «become the boss's deputy». Because of this the work colleagues will sooner or later feel offended, which will spoil the friendly relationship. Since – as this example assumed – there are better candidates for the position of deputy, these two goals are not compatible. Advance towards one goal therefore leads to backward steps with respect to the other goal.

This is true both for the short term as well as for the long term greater goals. According to whether the goal is to live the basic rights of existence or whether the goal of amassing material wealth has the upper hand, a person will possibly behave differently or

make completely different decisions in a given situation. The pursuing of different objectives can go so far that as a result of this quite different personality traits can occur within one and the same person. Typical for the modern western world for example is that there is a great discrepancy between the moral behaviour of people in their business life and their private life.

The hierarchy in personal objectives

At the start of this treatise we considered the needs of humankind and during this we referred particularly to the hierarchy in human needs using the example of the Maslow theory: At the lowest level were the existential needs of a person and at the highest level the achievement of a state of lasting happiness, self-realization, salvation of the soul, harmony within oneself or whatever we like to call this state. On the basis of these needs the human being sets his own personal goals according to this theory. If for example his existence is assured, he attempts to realize the needs of the next highest level of hierarchy by setting his goals accordingly. The hierarchy of needs, which we have referred to already many times, therefore corresponds with a similar hierarchy of objectives: Our own goals can also be hierarchically arranged.

In other words: According to the needs which we wish to satisfy, we should select our goals from the corresponding hierarchical level. What sounds so simple and logical is however frequently a cause of disappointment in our personal development: Needs and objectives don't correspond but often even contradict each other in a flagrant way.

He who sets his life goals mainly in the material area, will also realize mainly material goals.

Many people set their goals in the material area such as for example financial income, property, possessions, and are surprised that they are not at the same time happier, calmer and more composed. Material objectives correspond with the lower hierarchical levels of human needs, in that they mainly ensure the basis for existence. As important as this is, it is then possible for a person to turn to other goals with confidence once the material existence is ensured. Otherwise this person remains fixed on these needs in his personal development too.

The need to safeguard the basis of existence more and more strongly can be compared with the taking of drugs: A certain amount of the drug is first taken to experience a given feeling. As time goes on greater and greater amounts of the drug are necessary to experience the same intensity of feeling. A switch is then made to harder drugs where the same process is repeated. This can continue as far as self-destruction.

When setting our objectives for life therefore we should take note of the hierarchy of objectives: If we seek happiness and harmony in our lives then we should select goals which correspond with the highest level of human needs. In plain language this means: The

respecting of the basic rights of existence in every situation should become our highest personal goal.

Concentration of strengths

We can fundamentally freely divide the energy or strength, which is available for our personal development, between various goals as we wish. For example one person can use 20% for the capability of increasing his material wealth, 50% for the capability of attaining power over others and the remaining 30% for the capability of increasing his personal standing in society. As long as these goals do not contradict one another then he will be able to develop his capabilities according to the amount of energy devoted to each of them.

The glasses model of subjective perception is automatically used for every random objective by our subconscious for the development of the corresponding capabilities. It is therefore tremendously important that we set clear priorities for our objectives.

One cannot be on two mountain peaks at the same time. –

One cannot realize several incompatible goals together.

From a certain capability level progress is only possible by concentrating on very few goals and finally on just one single goal. We can compare this with the climbing of mountain peaks in the example in the previous section: The starting point for the climb may well be the same for many peaks, but the higher a person gets the sooner he must decide upon one single peak. I cannot be on both peaks at the same moment and if I wish to climb both peaks one after the other I will have to go down again by a certain amount from the first peak.

The necessity of concentrating on a single goal is, by the way, well known in sport. At the level of a normal healthy sportsman it is possible to enjoy the most diverse types of sport without any problem. But if you wish to pursue top-level sports then it is only possible to achieve outstanding performance in just a very few related sporting areas.

In other words: The closer we get to a goal the smaller the number of incompatible goals which can be pursued successfully.

Objectives as self-motivation

How would you react, if your seven year old daughter declared that she would like to be an airline pilot? Would you immediately order a registration form from the national airline? Move close to the airport so that the daughter could visit it frequently later on? – Probably not. You would certainly be pleased that your daughter has this objective, but you would also explain that she will still have to go to school for a few more years.

And if ten years later your daughter decides upon a course in physics, or training as a gardner, would you be disappointed? – No. Your daughter has developed in the meantime. Perhaps she has even developed thanks to her objective of being a pilot. She knew that «If I want to be a pilot I will have to be attentive at school». She had thus become engaged, and in her own interests – without external pressure – had learned from it.

The goal of being a pilot had helped her to develop, although in reality she hadn‘t realized this goal. In everyday life this is frequently the case: Objectives serve as the motivating force for us to do something. A long-term goal is best divided into intermediate goals which can be achieved more quickly. The feeling of success when we achieve these intermediate goals can additionally act as a motivating force.

We should periodically check our goals, to see if they are still valid for us.

An objective can also serve as a signpost for us during particular stages in our lives, without actually having to achieve it. It is therefore necessary to look at our goals periodically to see if they are still valid for us or whether we wish to adapt them.

Objectives as an aid to success

In setting our objectives we instruct our subconscious to help us in realizing our goals. As an example of this we discussed the glasses model in the previous section. The subconscious creates the preconditions so that we can more efficiently achieve the desired goal. In the above example of the daughter we saw that this would also provide for example a good motivation for learning at school. She had considered the learning materials through a pair of glasses which had made them appear interesting.

In top sports events so-called mental training has been used for many years to achieve tremendous levels of performance. In essence this is virtually the same as what we are discussing here: The subconscious helps to focus our strengths and abilities on a concrete objective. Our performance with respect to the goal we are striving for can thereby be tremendously increased.

Sportsmen, who want to belong to the winning group and who for inexplicable reasons can demonstrate a series of successes, are therefore frequently said to have great mental strength. They are determined to reach their goal, they believe in their success and therefore give their subconscious strong signals. In this way the subconscious can correspondingly support them – and the desired success comes. This success in turn has a further strengthening effect and leads to an even stronger belief in further success, which again strengthens the signal to the subconscious and so on.

Let’s compare the help provided by the subconscious with other everyday situations: If our goal is to become a good hurdler, then our subconscious in a manner of speaking provides us with the running shoes and the hurdles. If we wish to become a good

mountain climber it provides us with rope, pickaxes and crampons. It is however thereafter up to us as to whether we actually use these aids or prerequirements or whether they simply remain as good intentions.

A long-term goal is normally divided into intermediate goals, the intermediate goals are achieved by solving concrete tasks. If my goal is to be a competent mountain climber perhaps I will set as my initial goal the achievement of a high level of stamina for the climb. Therefore as concrete tasks during the next few weeks and months I go mountain walking until my condition has improved. After this I aim for my next partial goal and so on.

Through the setting of partial goals and the solving of tasks we select our own path to the ultimate goal.

In most cases a goal can be reached in the most diverse ways. By selecting partial goals and tasks we establish our own way. The future mountain climber would also have had to first attend a climbing course in a gymnasium. Possibly for him personally the experience of nature during mountain walking is however very important and during his training in the gymnasium he would perhaps soon have lost his enjoyment of climbing mountains which would have turned him away from the goal.

The selection of partial goals and the tasks which we undertake to achieve these partial goals represent *our personal* route to the goal. The choice of the route is similarly very important, because this is what finally determines how easily we reach our ultimate goal.

Pursuing our own objectives

Our goals lead us to the situation where we do certain things in our life and leave other things aside. We can therefore influence other people in a simple way, if we influence their objective or at least the choice of their partial goals. Our deep longing for peace, happiness, calmness and harmony – as described in the highest needs of all beings – is also at the same time our weakness.

Advertising frequently tries to exploit our longing for happiness and harmony for its own purposes.

In the advertising field this longing, which is deeply embedded in every one of us, is exploited in more and more refined ways: By linking a service or product with a blissfully happy person or a harmonious situation, it is suggested to the viewer that thanks to the use of this product you will become successful, beautiful, desirable, rich or whatever – and this will (also) make you happy. We have already dealt with this briefly in the section on the needs of humankind.

Why does advertising promise us harmony and happiness? In the objectives of companies we don't often read that they would like to make people happy. On the other hand they do speak more frequently about maximising profit and suchlike. Although advertising naturally is also intended to convey information, the

statement «buy our product so that we can obtain a higher profit» would be much more honest in most cases[3].

Therefore once again the question: Why does advertising not just communicate matter-of-fact things, why does it appeal to our feelings and longings? The answer is clear: As we have already mentioned several times, in every person there is embedded this longing for the highest goal of perpetual harmony. This longing can also be exploited to maximize financial profit, to achieve power – yes even to manipulate other people. A great majority of people in the «developed» countries allow themselves to be manipulated or at least be strongly influenced in the way described above of their own free will.

What can we do to extract ourselves from this influence? The answer is: We must know what we want in our lives. Set our own clear objective. In this way we will finally do what *we* want and not what others would probably want us to do.

He who doesn't pursue clear objectives can easily be used by others to achieve their own goals. A goal can only be reached when a goal exists. A goal which does not exist is impossible to reach!

A clear goal prevents us being manipulated by others.

Let's summarize the situation up to this point: Our behaviour in a given situation depends on our own objectives. What we can achieve in our life depends to a large extent on which objectives we are pursuing. It is therefore worthwhile taking time to consider our objectives.

We must know what we want.

The course of our life depends on whether we strive for goals and which goals we are striving for. Whether we strive for our own goals or allow others to set them for us. We can distinguish between three fundamentally different options in setting our long-term objectives:

1. We wish to learn to rigorously respect the basic rights of existence in all our decisions.

   Here we provide our subconscious with a clear signal, we can build our pyramid and take off our glasses of subjective perception.

2. We set ourselves other concrete goals, for example power over others, financial wealth, fame, helping other people etc.

   Here we also provide our subconscious with a clear signal. It will also support us in reaching these goals. The longing for harmony however will not be satisfied by this.

3. We set no goals for ourselves. Or we set several mutually-exclusive goals for ourselves.

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[3] We will discuss the objectives of companies in a later volume of the book series «Time for change» in more detail.

Since the subconscious has no clear guidelines it cannot support us. There is a great risk of being misused by other people for the achievement of their own goals.

People who can be classified in category 2 of the above list are frequently seen by us as being successful and they are admired. Since they normally rigorously pursue their objectives they will probably achieve them – as do those in category 1 by the way.

Much more tragic is the fate of people in category 3: Very frequently they have not set themselves any goals at all, or if they have they are the sort of goals which are mutually exclusive. The pursuance of mutually-exclusive goals is frequently synonymous with the state of having no goal. They are dragged backwards and forwards between these non-compatible goals, since progress towards one goal is the same thing as a step backwards from at least one other goal.

He who, like the people in category 2 for example, wants to strive for power, wealth or fame needs as many other people as possible who will give him this power, money or admiration. Naturally it is primarily those people without their own clear goals as described in category 3, who are useful here. Those who don't set their own goals can more easily be manipulated by others.

Those who don't set their own goals can more easily be manipulated.

Have we therefore found the «culprits»? Are the people in category 2 the «baddies» who are responsible for everything that is wrong on our earth? Shouldn't we at last tell those people who strive for example for power, wealth, admiration or fame what's what?

Again this connection is however not as simple as that! Another person can only influence us, exert power over us, receive admiration from us etc if we want it or allow it. We are not helpless creatures who can be exploited by others against our will. It is only if we *permit* others to have influence over us or exercise power over us that they can also do just that. If we allow ourselves to be controlled and influenced by others we should not blame «the others», but rather we should see this as our own problem! It is entirely our responsibility *not* to allow this to happen if we don't want it to happen.

Most people in our society today do not give much thought to their goals in life – or maybe they do shortly before their death, when it is already too late to change anything in this life. Because of this the chances are very great that consciously or unconsciously they will be used by others in order to achieve *their* goals.

If we set ourselves clear objectives and also if we pursue them, we will prevent others from being able to exploit us. We more-or-less work on or for ourselves– and this must surely be more satisfying than chasing one way after this goal, then another way towards that (externally-set) goal!

Tasks

In the previous chapter we saw that tasks do not simply appear of their own accord. They are not «simply there», but result from a certain objective in the personal or professional area. The tasks can therefore also be just as diverse as the goals. The nature of the tasks correspond with a concrete plan, showing how a goal or partial goal should be reached.

If we wish to reach certain goals, we create our own tasks.

There are usually different options for how to achieve a given goal. In selecting our tasks we plan our personal route to the goal for which we are striving. It will however certainly not be the only possible way of reaching this goal but it will simply be the best way in our own eyes. The criteria we use to select this best route are naturally very individual.

The way these tasks are later solved is in effect the conversion of the plans into reality. These are further decisions and negotiations. By this means we choose our path towards the achievement of a goal.

If for example someone sets himself the goal of setting aside a particular amount of money during the coming year as a reserve, this can be done in several ways, corresponding with different tasks:

- Spending less money - thereby achieving the goal with the same income.
- Attempting to get a higher salary within the current job and to keep the outgoings constant.
- Searching for a second job.
- Attempting to find a better paid job.
- Selling some possessions.
- Hoping to win lotteries or competitions
- Perhaps the money already exists and only needs to be transferred into a savings account.

Each of the options on this list corresponds with a different and real task. Each individual task can however lead to the desired goal. No one would probably set himself all of the tasks at the same time but would decide upon one or perhaps two of them. This corresponds with the personal plan for reaching the goal.

The selection of tasks, which we wish to solve to help to realize our goals, corresponds with our plans.

The effective solving of the task thus corresponds with the path being pursued towards the achievement of the goal. Perhaps however the task will only be poorly resolved such that the goal being pursued is not achieved in spite of good planning.

Let’s take as a further example a married couple who have decided that they would like to have children. From this objective and its realization a whole series of tasks will arise in the course of the following years: Material support for a family, provision of home

and living area for the children, upbringing, education etc. By deciding that they would like to have children this couple have automatically set themselves these tasks. They have created a large number of tasks for themselves. We could also find lots of similar examples in the business area.

Before a task can be solved it should be accurately and clearly formulated. Thereby it is not important whether I myself solve the task or whether I delegate it to a third party. In the professional area we frequently differentiate between the person who sets the task (task setter, delegator) and the person who carries out the task (performer). In the private area we normally set our own tasks.

Decisions

We decide on our own goals ourselves.

Our lives consist of an abundance of decisions: The first thing we do is to choose our goals. As we discussed in the section on objectives in doing this we can also decide to take over the objectives of other people or help other people to achieve their own objectives. If we pursue several incompatible objectives they compete with each other when every decision is made. We therefore choose *one* of these incompatible objectives as a *guideline* for our decision. This means that we select an objective and then make the decision on the basis of this objective. When the next decision is made it is naturally possible to use another objective as the guideline. In any case it is always our own decision as to *which* objectives we strive towards.

In every decision we select one of our goals as a guideline for this decision.

For every objective towards which we wish to strive we can also choose *how* we would like to reach it. In making these plans we set intermediate goals and then select tasks, which should lead to the achievement of the goal if we carry them out effectively. If we don't wish to make these decisions but would rather leave the planning to someone else, this is again still our own decision which we freely make.

If we ourselves set no goals, but simply solve tasks which have been transferred from other people then we automatically help those people to achieve those goals from which these tasks have arisen. By accepting these tasks we are effectively making a decision to support the corresponding goal. This is our own free will decision.

We decide for ourselves by the solving of those tasks how we wish to achieve a goal.

To help to understand this we could study once again the example with the three mountain peaks. Let's assume that the climb up to each of the peaks from the village takes several weeks, so that it is first necessary to erect intermediate camps on the way to the peak and these must then be filled with food stocks. Let's also assume that we wish to climb mountain A. When purchasing the necessary food in the village we meet another mountain climber. We get on

well and he convinces us that it would be sensible to set up the intermediate camp together. We are very enthusiastic about this idea and we put our food stocks together with his. In our state of euphoria we forget that it is his intention to climb mountain C. We thus help him to erect the intermediate camp to climb mountain C and to carry up all the food to this camp. In all of this we are helping the other mountaineer to reach his goal. However we are visibly making ourselves more remote from our own goal (mountain A). No one had forced us to do this, we had simply decided to solve the tasks suggested by the other mountaineer.

The respecting of the basic rights of existence therefore means that each of us must make the correct decisions in our lives for ourselves personally. The correct decisions here are those which help us to develop further personally without at the same time restricting the rights of other beings on the earth.

With this approach it should also be clear that we cannot simply divide goals and tasks a priori into good and bad.

A «good» objective for us personally leads us to those tasks which help to train us in the capabilities and characteristics which we are still lacking, but which are required for the living of the basic rights of existence. These tasks should also however be dealt with in reality. It is only the way in which we personally *deal* with these tasks which – using the pyramid model – finally leads to another stone being built into our own pyramid - or to those building stones already added falling out again.

We decide for ourselves, which tasks we wish to deal with – and hence which goals we wish to serve.

I can only develop further if I realize a task within the meaning of the basic rights of existence. This means that when solving the tasks I make the correct decisions each time.

Perceptive ability

Now let's return to the description of human development towards the living of the basic rights of existence so as to achieve internal harmony. As the next step we would like to consider what actually changes in a person when he fulfills the preconditions for the development, in other words he would like to respect – without preconditions and from his own free will - the basic rights of existence and then take the steps necessary for this.

We have seen that we can compare human development with the achievement of virtuosity in a particular activity (for example making music, sport, handcrafts etc.). The basic rights of existence (the equal right of all beings to be on the earth, to develop and to carry out their tasks) must be so strongly internalized that in every situation we automatically act according to these rights without having to think about it. If we wish to pass through this development stage, our subconscious - amongst other things with subjective perception (glasses model) - will help us to eliminate the causes of violating the basic rights of existence. We learn step by step and hence build our own pyramid of human development. Within the scope of our personal development our perceptive ability with respect to everything around us and the important interrelationships in life also increases. In particular our abilities to intuitively perceive and evaluate important information for the respecting of the basic rights of existence also increase.

The respecting of the basic rights of existence also requires our intuition for this ability.

From our everyday lives we also know of the increase in the perceptive ability for everything which is related directly or indirectly with an activity which is practised like a virtuoso.

A professional chauffeur can take in significantly more information during a journey than an occasional driver. The latter is fully occupied with the activity of «driving a car» whilst in the case of the professional driver «driving is almost automatic».

A good mountain guide will often sense the threat of an avalanche and quite intuitively avoids dangerous slopes. He has learned how he can trust his senses. The occasional mountain climber however is normally more dependent on his intellect, which interprets the avalanche bulletins on the radio, television or in the newspaper. When in the mountains he is less «in his element» and his senses are not so well trained to the perception of the danger of avalanches. Indeed it would be even more dangerous if he was to rely upon his own feelings for danger!

The same piece of music played once by a virtuoso and then by an average player sounds different although both are playing exactly the same notes – the virtuoso can perceive more about the piece and also put more expression into it than the average player. Why would we otherwise go to concerts given by well-known artists, if every advanced music student could play just as well?

Why is there a difference between the music on a CD and «live» music?

From the above examples it is clear that the respective person has specially trained himself in certain abilities for the acquisition and evaluation of information from his surroundings for the perfecting of his particular activity. In a similar way the virtuoso appears to have acquired for himself a particular expressive ability or charisma with respect to his activity. The exact senses and information which are concerned here are difficult to judge in most cases. It is also just as difficult to scientifically explain *how* the information is evaluated or transmitted. The differences in the perceptive and expressive ability between someone who «is» a given activity and who becomes absorbed in it, and somebody who merely «carries out» the same activity, are however striking in the majority of cases.

There is no scientific explanation for our intuition.

Awareness

The same is true for the perceptive and expressive ability in connection with the living of the basic rights of existence. We refer to this ability in the following as **awareness**. The word «awareness» (to be conscious of something) describes well the interrelationship described above: He who is properly conscious when carrying out a certain activity is very «aware» of all the useful information. Unlike the less well-practised he has trained his senses to be able to take in lots of additional information and to express it. He who lives his life as a virtuoso, i.e. automatically allows himself to be guided in all situations by the basic rights of existence, in other words he who lives the basic rights of existence «is» the basic rights of existence. He becomes virtually «fused» with the law and has similarly trained many of his senses which help him in this activity of living the virtuouso life or even make it possible in the first place. With respect to life he has become aware of «his existence». We would say he has a great awareness.

With awareness we describe our ability to live the basic rights of existence.

We define awareness as the sum of all abilities, which permit us to respect the basic rights of existence in every situation.

With this definition we can therefore also postulate that it is our task in life to develop our own level of awareness further.

Earlier we compared human development with the building of a pyramid. The more of this pyramid which already exists, the higher is our awareness. Awareness can however also be represented extremely well by another model:

The model of the awareness sphere

We can use the model of a bright lamp to represent our level of awareness: Our body represents the lamp which is lit ever more brightly as our awareness increases. The brightness of our awareness lights up our surroundings so that we can see and hence perceive additional aspects of ourselves and our surroundings.

The light fully illuminates a space around us which is approximately the shape of a sphere. In the following we will describe this space as the awareness sphere. We can clearly perceive everything within the sphere with our common sense or our intuition. Outside the awareness sphere the brightness of our lamp is no longer sufficient. The further away something is from our sphere the less easy it is to perceive it.



Figure 5: Awareness as a sphere of light around our body

A white sphere of light around our body represents our awareness.

The better developed are our abilities to live the basic rights of existence the greater is our «awareness sphere». The light from our body becomes stronger such that it lights up a greater area. At first we can perceive or understand more and more things and interrelationships in ourselves and gradually also in our surroundings either with our common sense or our intuition. We have an increasingly better feel for what we should do or not do. For example just as we have seen with the virtuoso musician, with increasing development we can not only take in other information, but we can even «radiate» additional information. This is not only true for us human beings but also applies in general to all beings.

The model of the awareness sphere is extremely appropriate for discussing some of the characteristics of our personal development:

As already indicated earlier the development of a human being can only proceed in steps. We can at least partially select the sequence of lessons ourselves, however the extent of learning is the same for all beings. Using the analogy of human development

with the building of a pyramid we have already seen that it is sensible to first build the foundation and thereafter each layer symmetrically one on top of the other. It is true that we can try to build up the pyramid from just one side, but this will soon cause us difficulties since the sloping wall will fall down.

Let us consider this step by step development with the model of our awareness sphere: We cannot double the diameter of our sphere in one go without adopting all the diameters between the present state and the new diameter – if only for a short time. As our lamp shines out more strongly the diameter of our awareness sphere becomes ever greater, we cannot «leave out» any diameters. We will return again later to the enlargement of the awareness sphere when considering our development on the basis of tasks in our everyday and professional life. Thereby we will see how pointless it is to deviate from our personal training plan, in order – for whatever reason – to perform tasks which are too demanding or too easy.

In developing our awareness, we are developing joy, happiness and inner peace within ourselves.

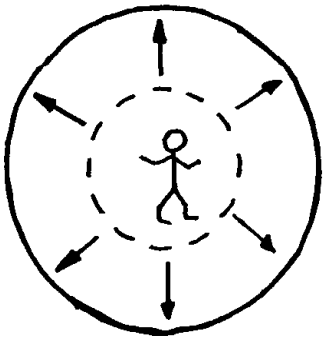


Figure 6: Enlargement of our awareness

In the next chapter, while considering our responsibilities, we will still frequently return to this model of the awareness sphere.

If someone pursues a goal other than that of personal harmony, he will naturally over a period of time also acquire the necessary abilities for this goal. His perceptive ability with respect to that information which is necessary to achieve his goal, will develop. As examples of the acquisition of such specific abilities we have mentioned a virtuoso musician, a good mountain guide or a dealer on the stock exchange. They all develop their abilities and in particular their intuition, however each one especially for his own task. There is not simply only «the intuition», rather intuition is normally task-specific or target-oriented. Correspondingly there is intuition for mountain climbing, playing the violin or football, share dealing etc. Intuition and all other abilities develop differently according to the objectives striven for in life by a person.

We can also represent the abilities required to achieve the respective goals other than personal harmony as the sphere around a person. These other goals are only those goals which do not lead to personal peace and harmony, in other words those goals which are not compatible with the respecting of the basic

rights of existence. Such goals may be for example power over others, high standing in society or revenge for a particular event. With these goals too we develop the corresponding abilities over time, which we can represent in our model as a coloured sphere of light around us. To differentiate between the abilities we will however give this sphere other colours, for example red, green, blue or a mixture of these colours.

If someone strives for several incompatible goals then the corresponding abilities will be developed as far as possible. The abilities of a given person with several goals can thus be represented by several, concentric coloured spheres of light. The size of each of these spheres is then established according to the level of the respective abilities as with the white awareness sphere.

However we continue to describe our awareness, i.e. the ability to live the basic rights of existence, with the bright, white light sphere.

When someone makes the living of the basic rights of existence into his greater goal, this means according to our model of the awareness sphere, that he no longer pursues the goals which have led to the coloured spheres. These will as a result gradually disappear, so that one single white sphere remains which becomes ever larger. In our model this symbolizes the increase in awareness.

Right of self-determination and self-responsibility

We decide for ourselves what we do or do not do.

In considering the foundation of our existence we have seen that the basic rights of existence guarantee personal freedom, we can do or not do exactly what *we* wish. On the other hand however we are also responsible for the consequences of everything we do or do not do. He who - according to his own discretion – can do or not do what *he* wants, is naturally fully responsible for everything that *he* does or does not do.

Our activities can moreover trigger a form of chain reaction of other effects (indirect consequences). If we scold a child it will possible hit a fellow schoolchild on the way to school, it may annoy the teacher and do badly in a test. This raises the question therefore of the extent to which we are responsible for the consequences of a causal chain of effects. How much should we consider the possible consequences of our decisions?

Since we do not perform many of our activities in complete isolation, but for example within the family or in a company, it is surely also of interest to see how much of the responsibility we carry for the consequences of those activities, which we carry out as part of or as a member of a group (family, department, firm, society etc.). In other words this concerns something like our «collective responsibility» for the activity of a group in which we are involved in some form. To introduce us to this subject let us consider the following examples:

A company manufactures and sells a product, which amongst other things can also be installed in equipment for warfare. The company supplies such products to a country which later uses them for a warlike dispute.

Question: Does this company in any way share the responsibility for the consequences of this war? If yes, who within the company carries this responsibility? Is only the board of directors responsible or does the cleaning lady, who contributes to the function of the company with her cleaning work, also share the responsibility?

A woman sells potatoes on the market. Amongst other customers she also sells potatoes to someone who later robs a bank.

Question: Does the woman who sold the potatoes to the person who later robbed a bank have any co-responsibility for the bank robbery? Would it be any different if the woman had sold him a gun and not potatoes?

In the following pages we will concern ourselves with this question of who has the *responsibility* for something. In this consideration we don't just want to know who is to blame but rather to what extent we should also consider the possible consequences when

we make a decision. Because that for which we are responsible is decisive for our development.

As a first step it is necessary to clarify what is meant by carrying the responsibility.

Carrying responsibility

Responsibility is neutral – it is neither positive nor negative.

Our existence on earth, our deeds, words, thoughts – yes even just our living processes - create a certain effect on our surroundings. For example simply by breathing we are converting oxygen into carbon dioxide, our skin evaporates water, we create a pressure on the soil with our feet. When we purchase groceries in a shop and pay with money we also create a certain effect.

We also carry the responsibility for these effects. On the basis of the examples given above it should be clear that «to carry the responsibility» or «to be responsible» is a priori neither positive nor negative. It is simply an impartial statement.

In clarifying the responsibility we are each time considering an effect which has already happened, a consequence or a result, and we ask who has contributed to this result with his decisions. Those people who have contributed to the given result with the decisions they have made – whether consciously or unconsciously, are responsible for this result. We thus assume that there will be an effect and ask ourselves which people have directly or indirectly caused this effect.

Let's consider three other examples:

- The lunch dishes are still standing on the table in the evening. Who carries the responsibility for this? Who has eaten, should someone have cleared up and if so who?
- The baby in the pram wears gloves. Who is reponsible for this, i.e. who has put them on or not taken them off?
- A man eats spaghetti in the canteen today for lunch. Who is responsible for the fact that he eats spaghetti?

Liability and responsibility are not the same.

We have deliberately selected three not very spectacular examples so as to clarify that we are really responsible for everything we do or do not do. Thereby it is necessary to distinguish clearly between liability and responsibility: We generally use the word liability in connection with negative events to clarify questions relating to guilt. Responsibility however is far more comprehensive, it is not about guilt but rather the question of who has contributed to a given event with his decisions.

It is moreover impossible to withdraw from this responsibility in any way or form or to arrange insurance against responsibility in the same way that you can arrange personal liability insurance. As soon as a decision we have made has contributed to the result, we

are personally responsible for it (see below). Whether other people have similarly contributed to this result is of no importance in the consideration of our responsibility. Here is another example of this:

A person falls on the pavement and remains there - lying down. The first three passers-by see the person lying on the ground and continue onwards without doing anything. The fourth person who happens to pass by helps the fallen person back onto his feet.

If a decision we have made has contributed to a particular result, we are responsible for this result.

The first three passers-by have not done anything, they are responsible for the fact that they did nothing. The fourth person had decided to do something and is responsible for the way he has treated him. Thereby there is nothing to suggest that the first three people had acted incorrectly and the fourth person correctly. In this question of responsibility we are not concerned with right or wrong but merely the question of who has contributed to a given result with his decision. We are seeking the people who bear the (shared) responsibility for causing a certain effect, a certain event or a certain result. This is completely independent of whether the considered effect in our view was positive or negative. We are only concerned here with who contributed to this effect with his decisions.

There is a close relationship between the development of a person and the decisions for which that person is responsible. In the previous chapters we have compared personal development towards harmony and peace with the construction of a pyramid. We set one stone in place upon another and hence build up our pyramid. The building stones of this pyramid are the deeds and decisions for which we are personally responsible. If we respect the basic rights of existence in our deeds and decisions, then additional building stones will be created which we can set in place. If we violate the basic rights of existence, then what happens is just the opposite: Building stones which we have already inserted will fall out, and we will have to acquire the corresponding characteristics and abilities we require to live the basic rights of existence again in other situations, so that the pyramid can be repaired again and correspondingly built up further.

The building stones in our pyramid of human development are the deeds and decisions for which we are responsible.

We must however point out again that the building stones for our pyramid can only be created from decisions for which we are personally responsible. This consideration of responsibility should therefore in no way encourage the idea of passivity according to the guiding principle «I will be responsible for as little as possible». Such passivity would hold back our personal development and in no way would it foster it. It is only our own activities which can develop us further whilst at the same time following the basic rights of existence. The more decisions for which we are responsible the fundamentally greater are our opportunities for development! We will therefore discuss in the following sections under which conditions it is sensible to carry out an activity or when should we actually not carry out that activity. Essentially this means that we

must set our opportunities for development against the development risks.

That for which we are responsible influences our future.

Clarification of our responsibility can help us in retrospect to find out whether in a given situation we have respected or violated the basic rights of existence. As a much more important aspect of this however, it should permit us to clarify the extent to which we are responsible for our behaviour and the direct or indirect consequences of it. As we have seen above, our future is influenced by everything for which we are responsible. How far *in advance* therefore should we *consider* our decisions? Because of the powerful interrelationships on the earth it is quite possible to continue to develop any of the previously-used examples so that the person, who initiates an activity, would be responsible after a certain time for everything which happens on the earth! As an example of this let's take again the man who eats spaghetti in the canteen for his lunch: He sprays sauce on his shirt, the shirt is washed with a washing agent which pollutes the water courses, the polluted water reaches the sea and hence the food chain. The water evaporates from the sea and later is precipitated in the form of rain somewhere else on the earth again. After a certain time practically the whole earth is affected or influenced in one way or another. And all this, only because this man ate spaghetti on a certain day!

However it cannot really be as bad as this, limits must be set on our responsibilities somewhere. Where these limits are and how we can find and change our own limits of responsibility will be discussed on the next few pages.

How far does our responsibility reach? Awareness of responsibility

With the clever phrase „**awareness of responsibility“** we describe the ability of a person to live his life while fully aware of his responsibilities. The better someone – consciously or unconsciously – considers the consequences of his decisions in advance and acts accordingly, the more aware he is of his responsibilities.

As already indicated in the previous section, a decision we make often triggers other events. A further practical example from the family: The cat chases after a bird. As a punishment the owner doesn't give her anything to eat, and because of this the cat steals the meat which is waiting on the table for the family's lunch and on top of this, it also knocks over the bowl containing the pasta. The family react irritably, the children begin to fight etc.

Our decisions often result in many indirect consequences.

Because of the tremendous amount of interlinking on the earth, our decisions often result in many additional consequences which we ourselves may not even notice, and for which we certainly didn't strive. We presumably did want the immediate consequences of our decision, otherwise we will have made a blind decision, i.e. we would have made a decision without knowing what we wanted to achieve with this decision.

In the above example with the cat the owner gave the cat no food as a penalty. As an immediate consequence the cat suffered from hunger. This would certainly have been clear to the woman as she had decided to punish the cat in this way. The fact that the cat would then as a further consequence «remove» the family's lunch (first indirect consequence), was however presumably not so easy to foresee and certainly not the further consequence that the family would react irritably (this statement would be incorrect if this same event with the cat and the lunch had already happened many times before). We can designate the respective consequences of the immediate consequence as indirect consequences.

Another example: A student groans about his homework. He has got to write an essay and just can't make any progress. His mother suggests a break may do him good and sends him to the village shop to purchase a few items. There he chances to meet his girlfriend from school and chats to her for a few minutes. He returns home happily and in the briefest possible time he writes his essay.

Who is responsible for the fact that he could now write the essay so quickly? The mother, the student, the girlfriend or all three together? Or just the mother and the student? Or...?

Another example: Someone throws a ball against a wall with his hand. The ball bounces off this wall and hits somebody else. The direct consequence of this activity is the bouncing of the ball from the wall. As an indirect consequence another person is hit. All the further contacts this ball makes until it stops are also classed as indirect consequences.

Whoever has already played with a ball will assume that a ball thrown against a wall will bounce back again. This direct consequence can therefore quite properly be classified as directly foreseeable.

Much more difficult to answer however is the question of whether the first indirect consequence, i.e. the other person being hit by the bouncing ball, could also have been foreseen. For this purpose we need additional information: Was this other person already there beforehand? How good is the person we are considering at throwing balls? Had this person made sure before throwing the ball that no one was endangered? Where did this happen? (In a gymnasium or on the street) etc. According to whether the person who threw the ball was a professional handball player or a 10 year old child, the answer to the question concerning the predictability of the indirect consequences would be different.

In our daily life our demands with respect to the ability to predict the consequences of an activity increase with the experience of a person in this activity.

In other words: In our daily life our demands with respect to the ability to foresee and appraise the consequences of an activity increase with the experience of this person in the respective activity and the level of his responsibility for his own actions (for example through age, experience, intellectual abilities and education). For an accurate clarification of the responsibility in the previous examples, lots of additional information would thus be needed. In the final analysis what we are concerned about here is merely to show that the responsibility for decisions depends above all on the person who made the decision.

In the chapter about the development of mankind we saw that in parallel with the increasing virtuosity in a given activity, the ability to perceive the respective external influences and information concerning this activity also increases. As concrete examples of this we compared a professional chauffeur with a normal car driver, a mountain guide with an occasional mountain climber and a professional musician (artist) with an average musician. Thereby we could recognize: He who carries out an activity with real virtuosity can automatically also perceive additional aspects with his senses and according to the type of activity he can also send out additional information «unconsciously». Amongst these «additional aspects» is also the ability to assess the consequences of the practised activity. Looking at it this way it is clear that we can expect a greater level of foresight from a virtuoso in his activity than from a beginner or an advanced student in the same activity.

The more practised someone is in a given activity the better he can assess its consequences.

Exactly the same is true for the activity of «living the basic rights of existence». The better a person can do this the more foresight we

can expect from him for the appraisal of the consequences of his decisions.

With increased awareness the ability to act responsibly is also increased.

Earlier we described awareness as the sum of all the abilities required to be able to respect the basic rights of existence in every situation. The greater awareness a person has the more readily he can permit additional information – consciously or unconsciously - to flow into his decision-making. The greater the awareness of a person the more responsibly he acts as a result.

As a model we have represented the awareness of a person as a sphere of white light around the respective person. Everything which takes place within this awareness sphere is available to this person in the form of abilities and the corresponding senses, to be able to make decisions in full harmony with the basic rights of existence. Inside the sphere the light is sufficiently bright to be able to perceive the corresponding consequences.

For that which takes place outside the awareness sphere the abilities and senses required for perception are still being built up. We can imagine that our light outside the sphere may (still) not be bright enough to light things up. Therefore we cannot or can only partially perceive the consequences outside our awareness sphere.



Figure 7: Awareness sphere

We are responsible for those consequences of our decisions, for which we can also perceive the necessary information.

We are therefore responsible for all the consequences of our decisions, in the case of those for which we can also perceive the necessary information – this is the case for everything which takes place *within* our awareness sphere.

According to the earlier discussion under the heading «Carrying responsibility» we established that all our decisions are tested as to whether their consequences within the awareness sphere respect or violate the basic rights of existence. If they were respected then this decision contributed to the construction of our pyramid of personal development, i.e. we get closer to our major objective. If the basic rights of existence were violated then new learning steps are marked out so as to make up for the failed test.

We have described the ability to weigh up the possible consequences of our decisions as the awareness of responsibility of a person. A high awareness of responsibility requires the ability to be able to weigh up the many consequences of a personal decision in advance. In complex situations this is ultimately only possible by intuitive means. Without being able to analyse the negative or positive consequences of the decision with our intellect, we can still feel which decision is correct. An additional sense, such as for example our inner voice, can lead us.

A great awareness of responsibility requires a high level of awareness.

As we have already discussed in the previous chapter, the necessary intuitive abilities required for this increase with increasing awareness. A high awareness of responsibility therefore requires a high awareness as a precondition. The phrase «awareness of responsibility» as a combination of responsibility and awareness illustrates this in an impressive way.

The principle of self-responsibility

Let's summarize the previous discussion: From the basic rights of existence each being derives the equal right to live, to develop and to carry out its tasks. Every being can thereby decide for itself what it wants to do or not do (the principle of self-determination). He who is free to decide for himself what he should do or not do is naturally also responsible for the consequences of his decisions. Who otherwise would be responsible for the consequences of a decision if someone can freely decide? From the principle of self-determination there follows therefore the *principle of self-responsibility*:

Every person carries – according to his awareness – the responsibility for the consequences of his decisions.

Every person carries – according to his awareness – the responsibility for the consequences of his decisions.

Why we do something is not significant for living the basic rights of existence. We have decided to do it. That is sufficient. There is no difference whether I kill because I was ordered to or whether I decided to do it for myself. I did it – therefore I am responsible for it.

It is true that we can prevent someone from being able to do certain things, by for example putting this person in prison, no one can however *force* another person to do something against their own will[4]. Everyone has his own free will and the right of self-determination and can also make use of it. By the way this is also true for a position in a company: Every employee can decide for himself whether or not he will follow the orders of his superiors. This may seem to be highly theoretical in practice but it is still true! Naturally the consequences of not doing something under protest in certain cases can be extremely painful (dismissal, punishment

[4] We do not wish to go into the effect of drugs and psychotropic drugs, which can be used to manipulate a person's will, here.

etc.), but in spite of this the option exists. In certain cases there is – on the basis of our responsibility for the basic rights of existence – even the «duty» to avoid doing something. This subject will be dealt with in detail in Volume 2 of the book series «Time for change».

Our responsibility is proportional to our awareness.

We have seen that with the increasing experience of a person we can set higher demands on his ability to assess the consequences of his actions. The more practised a person is in a given activity the better he can normally assess the consequences of his action. The ability to assess the consequences of our decisions with respect to the following of the basic rights of existence is part of our awareness. If on the basis of my awareness or my abilities I am able to assess or to feel the consequences of a decision I have made, I am responsible for the consequences of this decision. The responsibility for the consequences of our decisions increases with our ability to perceive these consequences. Or to put it another way:

With increasing awareness the ability to carry responsibility also increases.

If I cannot assess the consequences of a decision

The greater the awareness of a person, the further in advance he can and should consider his decisions.

We have previously represented awareness with the model of a white sphere around our body. The greater the awareness of a person the greater the diameter of this awareness sphere. With this model we are responsible for all the consequences of our decisions, which take place within our awareness sphere. The light of our awareness is very bright here so that within this sphere we can see or perceive the consequences of our decisions.

It is therefore possible to come up with the idea that very far-reaching decisions should be made by people with low awareness, since such people would therefore apparently not be responsible for the consequences. This would not however make sense for several reasons:

1. He who cannot assess the consequences of his decisions, will sooner or later harm the general public.
2. He who delegates a task to someone with too low a level of awareness, is personally responsible for this action and its consequences.
3. He who cannot even assess the immediate consequences of a decision, does perceive this with his sound common sense. The person with low awareness perceives that he is groping in the darkness.

If we don't know the immediate consequences of a decision we can perceive this fact.

We should consider the third point a little closer. We can assume that someone perceives that he cannot assess the immediate consequences of a decision. If I walk through the darkness at night, I very quickly notice that I can't see anything. If someone

jumps off a projecting rock without knowing whether the ground is 1 m or 100 m below him, he is certainly aware of the risk. A car driver who, in spite of a completely misted-up windscreen, can continue to drive «blind» can hardly claim that he hasn't noticed it. In other words: If we cannot perceive the immediate consequences of our actions as a rule we soon notice this.

He who dares to jump off the rock or like the car driver dares to drive without being able to see is naturally responsible for this behaviour and its consequences. It is just the same for the following of the basic rights of existence: Whoever makes a decision the *direct* consequences of which he cannot assess, is fully responsible for those direct consequences. The direct consequences are indeed normally those for which we have directly striven in making our decision. They were the objective of our decision and were what we wanted to achieve with our decision. It will therefore be immediately obvious to someone if he himself cannot assess the direct consequences of his decision.

These direct consequences can also be found outside our awareness sphere. We are therefore however still responsible, because - as illustrated with the above examples – we ourselves will be able to perceive that we cannot assess the consequences.

Responsibility is somewhat individual

We have called the ability to perceive responsibility *the awareness of responsibility*. The awareness of responsibility cannot be any greater than our general awareness, since the corresponding awareness (of responsibility) is the basis for our perception of the possible consequences of decisions.

He who closes his eyes to the consequences of his decisions is at least responsible for his blindness.

The *ability* to perceive our responsibility is provided within the awareness sphere. Whether this is also perceived is decided in every case by the respective person himself. It is also possible to ignore the respective information or senses. Even if I look away so as not to have to see the results of my decision, in spite of this I am still naturally responsible for these consequences! For the time being however we will assume that the responsibility is always fully perceived.

When I give a hungry person something to eat the direct consequence of this is that afterwards he is not hungry. Therefore I carry the responsibility for this in any case. Possibly however the experience that it is possible to get food «simply in this way» will prevent the hungry person from taking up what would be for him a sensible job as a worker. This would then be an indirect consequence, for which I am responsible (or not) according to my awareness.

If several people in the same situation make the same decision, the extent of the responsibility for the consequences of this decision can be different for each person. Each person is

responsible for those consequences which are found within his personal awareness sphere. The higher the awareness of a person, the further in advance he should consider his decisions as a result.

Doesn't this mean however that people with a high awareness are disadvantaged? Looked at this way is it indeed worthwhile to develop our awareness? Of course it is, for the more responsibility we carry the higher are not only the risks but also the opportunities for our development. That for which we are responsible produces the building blocks of our pyramid of personal development.

The higher the awareness of a person the further in advance he should consider his decisions.

In our discussion on the development of humankind, we saw that personal development towards the respecting of the basic rights of existence corresponds with the development of awareness. A yearning within us causes us to strive for harmony and peace. Let us therefore compare the development of mankind with our school system: Looked at objectively we can see that in an examination for a university degree more demanding questions have to be solved than in a primary school test. The school children or students will however subjectively classify their respective tasks as «difficult». Is this fair or not fair? Are the students at the university therefore disadvantaged as opposed to the school children in the primary school?

It would be odd if in our school system we matched the requirements in the way of knowledge and abilities to the schoolchildren, but if we were then to be confronted in our lives with insoluble tasks. Isn't it particularly reassuring to know that in the «school of learning to live the basic rights of existence» the demands are also raised in steps?

As we develop further our ability to perceive increases. This is a component part of our awareness. We can sense better and better whether something makes sense or not, and this we frequently do without the intellect being able to give us a plausible explanation. We learn how to use our intuitive perception as an additional sense and to trust the information provided by it. A completely normal process as we already know from other activities.

In the following we will consider the consequences arising from the discussed responsibility for the consequences of our decisions.

Consequences from the acceptance of tasks

Since in principle every conceivable task can (and should) serve the further personal development of a person, in the next section we want to consider the acceptance of tasks from this point of view. Everyone can decide for himself whether he wants to accept and carry out a given task. Before someone accepts a task however, it is essential that he checks that the task is suitable for him, i.e. on the one hand whether it is compatible with his personal goals and on the other hand whether he has the necessary

abilities for carrying it out. Here we mean not only manual skills or intellectual abilities but also especially awareness. He who takes up a task is responsible for making sure that he has the abilities to solve it.

This is a consequence of self-responsibility: Everyone must be able to freely and independently decide whether he wants to take on a given task or not. It is after all impossible to force someone to carry out a task and then afterwards to make that person responsible for the consequences!

He who takes on a task, is responsible for checking whether he has the abilities to solve that task.

If a person does not carry out, or carries out dishonestly the test as to whether the task matches him or not, he runs the risk of accepting a task for which he is not suited. Or he may take on a task which contributes to goals which are not compatible with his own goals, and therefore negatively influences his personal development. This person is then however fully and completely responsible for the consequences of his decision to take on the task (principle of self-responsibility).

In the previous section we used the example of jumping off the rock without knowing how far below the ground is, and of driving a car with a totally misted windscreen for this purpose. In these examples the respective people must have been clear that they could not see what they were doing or that they could not assess the consequences of their current action. Thereby they ignored their basic common sense. These people are themselves responsible for this.

Let’s return to our comparison with a school or university: If a schoolchild takes part in a lecture at the university about the theory of relativity he will learn nothing about it because he doesn’t have the necessary basic knowledge for this. He will possibly however also miss what would be for him an important lesson in the primary school. Instead of accelerating his personal development then as intended he wasted his time by being intellectually overtaxed. Perhaps he even occupied the place of a «valid» student in the aforementioned lecture so that this student has now missed part of his education.

In the pyramid model in which we compare human development with the building of a pyramid, it is also easily possible to illustrate the acceptance of tasks which are too difficult: This corresponds with someone who wants to leave out some layers in the pyramid. Instead of laying the next layer of stones on top the existing one he tries to build a layer further up. It is easy to see that this cannot succeed...

It is therefore enormously important to check whether the tasks assigned to us «match our needs». To say that merely because a task has been offered or transferred to me it also matches my needs is certainly untrue. Every task requires both particular manual skills and also intellectual abilities or knowledge as well as a minimum awareness by the person carrying it out. This person is

finally responsible for checking whether he has all the abilities – including especially the ability to peceive the consequences of this task.

With the execution of these tasks the person carrying them out automatically contributes to the goals from which the tasks arose. If these goals are compatible with his own objectives then the solving of these tasks contributes to his personal development, if not they will impede his personal development. In the latter case it would be better for him not to take on the tasks.

The consequences of being overtaxed by a task

By carrying out a task which is too demanding, the person carrying it out in the first place impedes his own development. In considering the development of humankind we have seen that further development is only possible in stages. Just as for a pyramid the individual stones and layers must be symmetrically placed on top of one another one layer at a time. If someone is overtaxed by a given task, he is attempting to insert stones into a pyramid in which the lower stones are still missing, or are not correctly fixed. It is not possible to leave out individual building stones and then insert them later! Such an attempt is a pure waste of time.

Even if too demanding a task has been carried out in full accord with the basic rights of existence, it *cannot* lead to expansion of awareness. We have illustrated this above on the basis of the pyramid model, and earlier with the primary school child who attended a lecture on the theory of relativity at university.

Using the model of the awareness sphere we have similarly established that it can only be expanded continuously and also only from inside. It is not possible to simply jump over individual diameters of the sphere.

Let's now consider the three possible cases when a person takes on a task:

a) The task is matched to the awareness of the person

   The person, who carries out the task can also perceive the many indirect consequences of his decision within the scope of this task. We can therefore assume that he will carry out this task well and responsibly. The person carrying it out can also develop himself further in solving this task.

b) The task is too demanding for the person

   The person, who carries out the task – if he exhausts his competencies - with high probability will make decisions, the consequences of which he cannot perceive with the abilities available to him. The person will notice this if he uses his basic common sense and his intuition. If in spite of this he carries out the task, he cannot develop further with this task. There is also a

great risk that the rights of other beings according to the basic rights of existence will be impeded.

c) The task is not demanding enough for the person

For the person carrying it out this task is too boring. He is no longer correctly challenged and thus cannot develop any further. There is moreover the risk that his attention will diminish leading to false decisions.

Case a) is good both for the environment and for the respective person, cases b) and c) are bad for both! No one can therefore have any serious interest that someone should carry out tasks which are too demanding or not demanding enough.

No one can have a serious interest that someone else should carry out tasks which are too demanding.

Co-responsibility

What about the situation where tasks are carried out by a group of people? Who carries the responsibility for the decisions? Is there such a thing as collective responsibility? How far does the responsibility go within a group in the event of a causal chain of consequences? Can responsibility be shared?

To deal with the most important question here first: There are no changes to the responsibilities. Every person is responsible for the consequences of the decisions which correspond with his awareness, or in the case of the model of the sphere, for all those consequences which take place within his awareness sphere. The co-responsibility in a group or in a company therefore does not primarily depend on the individual employee's position in the hierarchy, but on his personal development. To return again to the example of supplying war equipment components, it would be theoretically conceivable that the cleaning lady carries co-responsibility and the company directors do not – assuming here that the cleaning lady is personally further developed, in other words she has a higher level of awareness than the members of the board of directors.

Also in a group our responsibility depends upon our personal awareness.

It is possibly also of interest here to discuss the degree of co-responsibility in a group of people. This is in any case easy to do since the basic rights of existence in a given situation can only be either observed or violated. There is no grey zone and no hierarchy. It isn't possible to be more or less on a boat - either you are on the boat or not.

There is no hierarchy of responsibility. Either we are responsible for something or we are not.

It is essential that we free ourselves from the well-known day-to-day system of having an account with credits for «good deeds» and penalties for «bad deeds». Violation of the basic rights of existence is and remains a violation and cannot made up for by observing the basic rights of existence in other situations. If I am qualified on the basis of my awareness of my co-responsibility,

then I am co-responsible but certainly no more or no less than the other co-responsible people.

As a reminder: All beings wish to develop further. This development concerns the living of the basic rights of existence, in other words unconditional love, in every situation. If I am unsuccessful in this in certain situations, then sometime in the future I will be confronted with situations which permit me to relearn the corresponding characteristic. Therefore the *degree* of co-responsibility in a given situation is unimportant. At best the question as to why I have violated or not violated the basic rights of existence in a given situation can be of interest, for this would permit me to better adapt my individual learning programme in the future to my learning abilities.

The reasons for our decisions are always ours alone.

The motivation or the reason for not observing the basic rights of existence in a given situation is only of interest for the planning of future education. In the situation under consideration something external can never be drawn in as the reason for, or as an excuse for my decision. **The actual reasons for my decisions are always mine alone!** – even when I have made the decision within a group of other people.

It cannot be repeated frequently enough: To achieve lasting harmony within ourselves we must live the basic rights of existence in every situation. The reason *why* we have lived them or not lived them in a given situation is not important for us personally. There is no reason to not live the basic rights of existence in a given situation. *There is not one individual exceptional situation where the basic rights of existence should not be lived!*

My personal contribution

The expansion of our awareness is only possible through solving those tasks which are matched to the actual status of our training. The tackling of tasks which are «too difficult» does not lead to any kind of acceleration of our development. In fact it is the opposite, it leads to a slowing down or even to a standstill or to steps backwards. The same is also true where the demands are insufficient.

This is immediately obvious in virtually every other form of training: A music student who learns a piece which is too difficult for him during his training will not make faster progress in his learning process than another musician, who only plays pieces which are matched to his actual abilities. If a good piano player only ever plays quite simple pieces with one hand, in time he loses his ability with the second hand: He takes steps backwards or forgets what he has learned about two-handed piano playing. A car driver who also drives a formula one racing car, will not become a better car

driver because of this. A sportsman who trains to run over a length of 5 km will obtain no advantage at all for his 5 km stretch by completing a 42 km marathon, even if he finishes the marathon in a very good time.

From these examples it is easy to see that independently of the trained discipline, it is only possible to make progress in the training if the training is well matched to the actual abilities. For this reason it is necessary to permanently live the basic rights of existence in our lives. Earlier we spoke about the fact that we can imagine the development of humankind as a series of lessons which in the course of time have to be successfully completed. However it is important not to confuse this with a series of tests which have to be passed arbitrarily or not arbitrarily. Our lives concern the *learning of the ability* to live a life of unconditional love in every situation or to master this ability like a virtuoso. It is not possible to master an ability by doing something just once but by establishing and then retaining this ability through continuous corresponding training.

If for example I wish to train for the circus with a balancing act on a tightrope 10 m above the ground, I would presumably start with the rope just 50 cm above the ground and put a soft mat below it and then gradually increase the level of difficulty. Even when I have first successfully carried out the balancing act at a height of 10 m it does not help me much: I will want to achieve security in the activity and will want to be able to do it at every performance and not just once. What is necessary here is to be able to completely *master* the activity at a height of 10 m. The quickest way to achieve this is to build up the level of difficulty in steps.

Both for we ourselves as well as for the environment the best thing is to try to develop on the basis of matching tasks.

If the task is not demanding enough or is too demanding the person carrying it out cannot develop further. Possibly he will even visibly distance himself from his goal because of this in that he violates the basic rights of existence. Perhaps he will even prevent another person, for whom this task would have been well matched, from developing further with this task. He thus damages himself as well as many others. Both for himself as well as for his environment the very best thing is therefore to try to develop further by means of *well-matched* tasks.

This statement is tremendously important. If I personally would like to help to solve the problems of the world and work for the general wellbeing then I don't have to travel all over the place as a sort of modern missionary telling other people what they should and should not do. I should also not attempt to «develop» other people so that they will «also» eventually work on their awareness.

I can achieve the best possible effect if I personally continue to develop with respect to the basic rights of existence and if I can arrive at a state of personal harmony. Interestingly this is both best for me personally as well as for my environment! A sort of «egoism», which benefits the general wellbeing!

It is therefore also extremely absurd to make our personal development dependent on some kinds of conditions, such as for example «if they first do such and such ... then I will do....» etc. That which I can personally bring into this world does not depend on others but simply and exclusively on me alone. My biggest possible contribution is from my own personal development – the further I develop the better it is for me and for all others. I must however also really carry out this development – to merely think about it will not achieve anything!

The greatest gift I can give to my environment, to humanity and to myself is my personal progress on the way to living the basic rights of existence.

The greatest gift which I can give to my environment, to humanity as a whole and especially to myself is my personal progress on the way to harmony within myself.

By this means and only by this means can I provide my maximum contribution to the general wellbeing.

The interaction between objectives and abilities

In our day-to-day lives we find that someone who is already good at playing football in most cases also likes to play football very much and would like to constantly improve his football skills. If a good programmer has the choice between jointly working on a forward-looking software project and working in a vegetable shop the chances are usually significantly greater that the programmer will stay true to his line of business and would like to develop further within it. The same is true for practically all abilities: If we can already do something well the motivation is greater to use this ability and to improve it.

It is therefore worthwhile investigating the relationship between our abilities and the corresponding objective. We have already established earlier that we don't develop our abilities without reason, but rather we develop them specifically to be able to achieve a certain goal. From the above examples it is however clear that a stimulation also occurs in the reverse direction: Already-existing abilities lead us to continue to pursue the corresponding goal – and under certain circumstances even more strongly than before. We will therefore now introduce a model to demonstrate our objectives:

The model of the tuning bowls

Have you already had the experience where you find someone very likeable without knowing anything about them and without even having spoken to them? As you get to know this person later you often find that you have many things in common. In particular you will normally find that he has similar objectives in his life. Or, since we often prefer to speak about experiences, you have both had similar experiences in your lives. Pure chance - or perhaps more likely not? Similar life experiences mainly point – according to everything we have previously discussed – to the fact that we are working on similar development steps. Since we do not develop by ourselves this finally however indicates similar objectives for our lives.

Our own objectives are difficult to hide since in fact we constantly «radiate» our objectives all the time. In reverse we frequently feel the objectives of other people without even knowing anything about that person and without having spoken to them.

To help to introduce the model let us consider the following example, which may be well-known from our schooldays: We take two tuning bowls which make the same sound. One is put somewhere in a corner of the room, the other is then made to sound by hitting it. Now the tuning bowl which is sounding is

touched so that it cannot vibrate any more. We then find with surprise that the other tuning bowl in the corner of the room has also started to vibrate and continues to vibrate. «Somehow» the vibration of the first tuning bowl has transmitted the vibrations to the second tuning bowl without touching it. In technology we call this a resonance effect. This effect can happen if both tuning bowls have the same sound or expressed more scientifically if they have the same natural frequency. We will return to this form of the transmission of vibrations in the next chapter.



Figure 8: Tuning bowls

Previously in the model of the sphere we represented our *capabilities* as a sphere around our body. The larger the sphere the more developed are our respective abilities.

Now let's also introduce a model to represent our *objectives*: In this model we can represent every non-compatible goal[5] which we pursue by a tuning bowl, and better still a tuning bowl which is within us. We ourselves keep these tuning bowls vibrating, in other words for every incompatible objective we radiate a sound at a certain frequency.

The loudness of this sound strongly depends amongst other things on the priorities which we have assigned to the respective objectives. The louder a tuning bowl sounds the higher is its priority.

If for example a person pursues 3 incompatible goals, we can represent this in our tuning bowl model with 3 different tuning bowls. This person simultaneously sends out 3 different sounds. The loudest sound corresponds to that goal which is presently taken as the main guideline for decisionmaking. As we have already indicated earlier the priorities in setting goals can quickly change. In our model another tuning bowl would then sound louder.

With this model we would next like to discuss the mutual influence between abilities and objectives. We can assume that in making a decision, we use that objective as a guideline which at this point in

[5] We describe in general all objectives, which are compatible with one another, as the same objective or the same goal. Incompatible goals are mutually exclusive, i.e. our getting closer to one goal simultaneously leads to our getting further away from the incompatible goals.

time vibrates the most intensively and thus makes the loudest sound.

Abilities and objectives influence one another

Right at the start of this chapter we established that abilities and objectives clearly mutually influence each other. If expressed according to our two models, we considered the relationship between the light sphere, which represents our abilities and the tuning bowl, which represents the corresponding objective. Apparently the tuning bowl and the light sphere cannot be considered independently of one another. There is mutual influence between them[6].

We develop the necessary abilities to achieve a particular goal.

We have seen before that our abilities can only be developed if we pursue a corresponding objective. A light sphere can only develop further if a tuning bowl, which representes the corresponding objective, vibrates within us. Thus for example in order to increase our awareness sphere a tuning bowl with the objective of «respecting the basic rights of existence» is necessary. The number of tuning bowls and light spheres is also identical for this reason.

In the model with the tuning bowls we can assume that as the guideline for a decision we always select that objective which is the one that vibrates the most intensively at that moment. To put more energy into an objective therefore causes the corresponding tuning bowl to vibrate more intensively. The more of our personal energy we put into a particular objective the more intensively we can pursue this goal. This is how we set the priorities of our objectives.

On the basis of the above examples with the football player and the programmer, we have seen however that in reverse the abilities, which already exist (light spheres), can influence our choice of goal (tuning bowl) when we make a decision. A sort of momentum arises: The objective brings about the development of the corresponding abilities. On the other hand the already-existing abilities have the effect that the corresponding objective is more and more selected as the guideline for decisionmaking.

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[6] So that we don't end up in a discussion as to whether the chicken or the egg came first, we must make it clear here that abilities can only be developed if a corresponding objective exists. Consequently it is not possible for our abilities to determine our goals. If we pursue several goals, our abilities can however affect the *selection* of the objective chosen as the guideline for a decision.

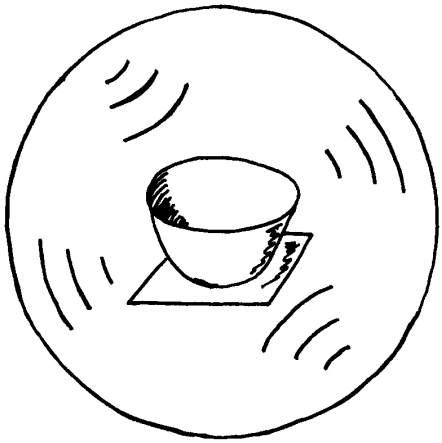


Figure 9: The influences of light sphere and tuning bowl

Now let‘s transfer these findings to the two models: If we use our personal energy to pursue a particular objective then the corresponding tuning bowl begins to vibrate more strongly. The more of our energy we put into this the more intensively this tuning bowl vibrates.

This leads to the fact that we select the respective objective more often as the guideline for our decisionmaking. Our abilities to achieve this goal can develop by means of this frequent training. The light sphere around us which corresponds with this ability, increases in size.

If for example we assign a higher priority to living the basic rights of existence, then the tuning bowl which corresponds with this goal, vibrates particularly intensively and thereby will sound loud. We will therefore frequently select this goal as the guideline for our decisions. This leads to the white light sphere being able to increase in size – and our awareness develops.

However the energies between the light sphere and the tuning bowl flow in both directions: The vibrations of the tuning bowl permit the enlargement of the light sphere and in reverse the illumination of the light sphere encourages the vibration of the respective tuning bowl. As already indicated an interaction takes place between the tuning bowls and light spheres or between objectives and abilities. In the technical area this can be compared with vibrating systems. For example with a flywheel, a mechanical spring or an LC network (tuned circuit) in electrotechnics. We would like to briefly discuss this with a simple electrical oscillating circuit with a power source Q, an inductivity L, a capacitance C and a lamp R as shown in Figure 10:

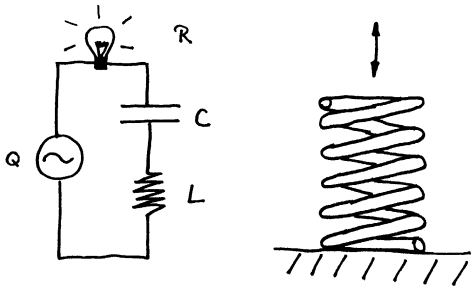


Figure 10: LC oscillating circuit and spring

The voltage source Q corresponds with a tuning bowl and the other elements together represent a light sphere. The size of the light sphere is symbolized by the light intensity of the lamp. The more power which vibrates in this system, the brighter the lamp shines.

Without an external power supply the system will gradually oscillate more and more slowly and the lamp will get darker. If however we feed sufficient external power the oscillations will be strengthened and the lamp will shine more and more brightly. The supply of electrical energy in our model corresponds in real life with the energy which we employ to pursue a particular objective. As we have already established many times, our abilities – that is our light spheres – can develop that much better, the more of our own energy we make available ourselves for achieving the corresponding goal. To express this according to our model, through the power source (the tuning bowl) we feed energy into the oscillating circuit. This increases the amount of energy in the oscillating system and hence leads to a more brightly shining lamp.

Even if we supply no more energy from outside, the system will continue to oscillate and the lamp in Figure 10 will continue to shine. According to the properties of the elements in the oscillating circuit the lamp can either continue to shine for a long time or only for a short time. At the voltage source Q we will still be able to measure a voltage. This corresponds to the interaction between the tuning bowl (voltage source) and the light sphere (lamp or the remaining power circuit).

This comparison with technical oscillating systems permits us to illustrate yet another very important characteristic: It is very difficult to suddenly change your objective. If a person has pursued certain goals for a long time and then suddenly replaces them with incompatible goals from one day to the next, he will invariably find that time and again he will make his decisions based on the guidelines of the old and no longer valid objectives.

We can explain this behaviour as a habit which has become established over a long time. There is however another method of explaining this with the example of the influence between the tuning bowls and the light spheres we have just discussed:

It can be hard work to change your goals in life.

Within the course of time we have acquired certain abilities for the achievement of our old goals. These abilities are naturally still available even if we throw overboard the corresponding objectives. It may even be worse: These abilities will lead to the no longer valid objectives being activated in us several more times, so that we will use them as guidelines for decisionmaking.

If for example someone has previously attempted to control all conflicts through the use of force, it is not sufficient to simply set behaviour without force as the new goal. As soon as this person feels irritated again he will more or less automatically try to combat this as before by pure force. This sort of behaviour can only be changed slowly. This new objective, which is no longer compatible with the old one, will only become a guideline for decisionmaking over a period of time. A strong will is necessary for such a transition.

Above we compared the light spheres and the tuning bowls with a technical oscillating system. This behaves in completely the same way: A flywheel doesn't suddenly stop when we no longer drive it. A spring doesn't stop vibrating as soon as we stop activating it. If we want to stop an ideal oscillating system we have to use just as much energy to stop it as we used beforehand for accelerating it. We can draw several conclusions from this:

- It is not only hard work to pursue certain objectives but it is just as hard to change these objectives. According to the degree to which we have developed our corresponding abilities, we will still pursue these goals for some time until we we can finally put them aside. Not least this also explains why human development takes so much time, since just as we acquire a new behaviour or new abilities through training, then because of the training already successfully carried out, we only slowly let go of existing behaviour patterns and abilities.
- It is worthwhile carefully selecting our goals. For having selected our goals we start to develop abilities. When we later change our goal the earlier abilities will often have to be eliminated in a very slow process.

These findings by the way apply to all objectives which are incompatible with one another. The selection of objectives for our life has such serious consequences for us and for our environment, that we should actually urge mankind generally to apply serious thought to this periodically!

In saying this we are not trying to force anybody to set the living of the basic rights of existence as his highest objective. Everyone should of course be completely free to select their own personal goals, but each of us should (must) at least apply some thought to his own goals.

Interactions with our surroundings

We have emphasized many times that we cannot pass off the responsibility for our decisions to our surroundings or to «others». The reasons for our decisions are always ours alone. We ourselves are responsible for ourselves. This cannot be changed.

In spite of this the question will certainly arise sooner or later whether we can positively or negatively influence our surroundings, i.e. our partner, our children, the neighbours, our work colleagues, nature etc. The question also arises as to what extent our decisions influence our surroundings. Although we alone are responsible for our decisions it is of course possible that in spite of this there will be some influence in one direction or another.

To illustrate this we can again use the model we have already introduced: The model of the awareness sphere represents our awareness – that is our ability to live the basic rights of existence - as a bright, white light sphere around us. Within this sphere our light is so bright that we can perceive the consequences of our decisions, outside this sphere the light intensity quickly diminishes, so that our perception is no longer clear enough with respect to seeing the consequences of our decisions. In just the same way this also applies to those objectives which are incompatible with the basic rights of existence. We have represented our abilities to achieve these goals with coloured spheres.

In addition we can use the model we introduced in the previous section of the tuning bowls with different sounds for characterizing our objectives. According to this we send out a certain sound with our tuning bowl for each incompatible goal. In making a decision we use as our guideline that objective which vibrates the most intensively, i.e. which sounds the loudest.

1 + 1 = 3: Abilities in a group

We will now look at how the abilities of several persons within a group can mutually support each other. For this purpose we will imagine that these people are jointly working on a task.

Let‘s consider first a group of several people with spheres of the same colour, i.e. all members of the group are pursuing amongst other things the same objective X. Let’s first remind ourselves again of the definition of the model: Inside the sphere are the fully-trained abilities to achieve the goal X. The size of the sphere is a measurement of the already developed ability to achieve this goal X.

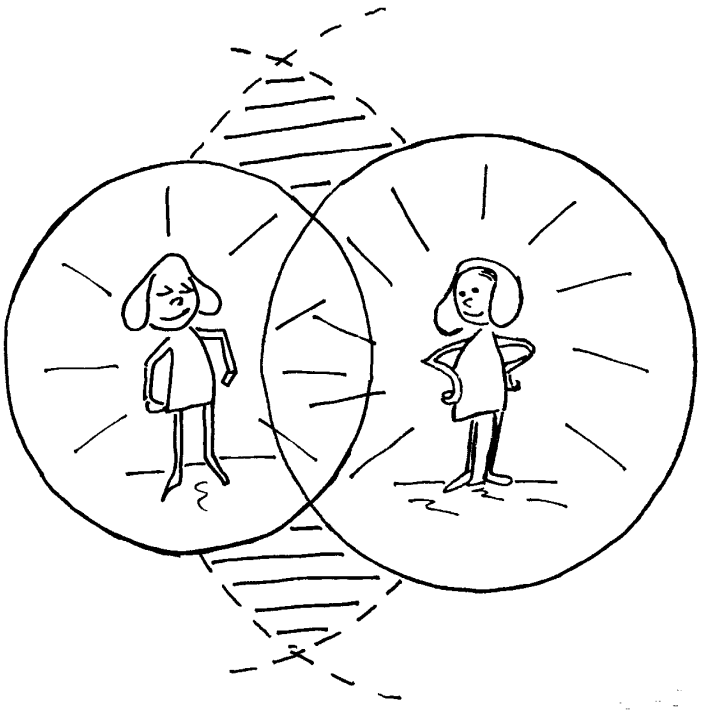


Figure 11: Overlapping spheres

The similar-coloured spheres of the participating people will often overlap. If two spheres are positioned beside one another so that for example the areas with 50% illumination overlap, then the overlapped area will be fully illuminated in the corresponding colour (hatched area in Figure 11). The area, which is thus fully illuminated through the group together, can therefore under certain circumstances be significantly greater than the area of the individual spheres. The abilities of a group can therefore be greater than the sum of all the abilities of the individual members of this group.

The ability of a group can be greater than the sum of the abilities of its individual members.

We know of this through our day-to-day life: Many tasks can only be jointly accomplished by a group of people whose abilities mutually complement each other. If for example the task is to carry away a load weighing 250 kg, then 3 people whose individual carrying capacity is 100 kg cannot achieve anything alone. However together they will be able to carry away this load.

What has been demonstrated in this example with physical abilities (strength), is naturally also valid in the intellectual area. In exactly the same way people can supplement each other as far as intuitive perception is concerned and hence they can jointly assess additional information.

This mutual addition of peoples‘ abilities has been used to benefit mankind from time immemorial. In particular the more complex problems are solved by groups of people. Today we use fine-sounding terms for this: We have brainstorming sessions, arrange conferences, meetings, discussions etc. in order to find solutions to particular problems.

We can however also observe similar phenomena in nature, for example in the case of animals the navigational abilities of swarms of birds and fish, the joint hunting of certain predators etc.

In the chapter on the interaction with nature we will again find evidence that we human beings often make use of this «group formation» with nature unconsciously. The white sphere of awareness basically exists in all beings. For this reason additional intuitive abilities are available in the healthy natural world, for example in a forest, on a sea or in the mountains. It is therefore worthwhile making difficult decisions in peace and quiet in a natural setting!

Personal responsibility also cannot be evaded in a group situation.

In conclusion we would again like to emphasize that self-responsibility does still exist in a group in spite of all this: We are also fully responsible for those decisions which we make within a group. This responsibility cannot be shared out like a cake but instead remains with the person or persons who made the respective decision.

Other people, or in general all beings, can help us in *making the decision*, in that within a group additional abilities are available. Amongst other things we can also by this means assess additional information in intuitive ways. We must not however confuse this help with the division of responsibility.

The priorities of objectives

If we assume that we wish to pursue several incompatible objectives, how do we decide in a given situation which of the objectives should guide us? We have already discussed the interaction between objectives and abilities earlier. Thereby we saw that abilities which already existed can influence the choice of guideline when making a decision.

As we will soon see, we often also make the choice of which objective we will use as a guideline in making a decision in interaction with our surroundings. Other people, institutions, animals, plants, nature etc. can all have an influence on the selection of our goal in making a decision.

In the tuning bowl model we assigned a certain sound or frequency to each incompatible objective. Compatible partial objectives each receive the same sound[7]. The more similar the goals are the more similar the assigned sounds. In reverse the sounds are that much more different the lower the compatibility between the goals.

[7] As a simplification we can describe all goals, which are compatible with one another, as the same objective or the same goal.

With this model we can now discuss the mutual influences in the choice of the current objective. We assume again that in making a decision we use that objective as a guideline which at this point in time vibrates the most intensively.

The tuning bowls of our goals can be excited into vibrating by other beings.

If there is a vibrating tuning bowl in our surroundings, i.e. if there is another being in our vicinity who is pursuing a particular objective, then our tuning bowl with the same sound – insofar as we have such a tuning bowl – will be excited into vibrating. We become aware of this objective due to these vibrations. In a manner of speaking it sends signals to us and calls to us: «Here am I, I am the most important objective, please use me as your guideline in making decisions in the present situation». In this way the chances increase enormously that we will in fact really do this: Just like a chameleon we adapt to our surroundings! Whether in the final analysis we really do select this objective as our guideline still depends however on several factors:

- If another objective is already vibrating more intensively within us than the tuning bowl, which has been excited from outside, then the objective which already vibrates within us, will drown out the externally-excited tuning bowl. We will not therefore change our guideline.
- If we don't have a tuning bowl with the corresponding frequency, then this frequency cannot excite any vibrations within us. Only those objectives can be activated which already exist within us.
- The intensity of the vibrations which affect us can be of different sizes according to the source of these vibrations. On the other hand our tuning bowls also differ in their vibrating ability.

Others can influence the priorities of our goals.

We assume that in making a decision we use that objective as a guideline which at this point in time vibrates the most intensively. We normally do not perceive for ourselves whether these vibrations or the tuning bowl have been excited by external forces or by us personally. The vibrations we have referred to here can change very quickly. We are therefore basically able within fractions of a second to make decisions based on completely different goals. This fickleness in our decisionmaking is naturally something which we would not want to happen too often, so we will therefore look at how we can prevent this from happening in the next section.

We have already discussed earlier the mutual influencing of objectives and abilities. In this we established with our models that the light sphere too can transmit vibrational energy to the corresponding tuning bowl. The intensity with which a tuning bowl vibrates within us therefore essentially depends on the following factors:

- On the priority which we ourselves, consciously or unconsciously, are presently assigning to this objective.

- On the amount of energy which we have available within us for the realization of our objectives.
- On the size of the corresponding light sphere, that is on the abilities we already possess for the achievement of this objective.
- On the intensity of the vibrations at this frequency which prevail around us. Such vibrations are created by other beings with the same objective.

Having now established this let us consider how we human beings mutually influence each other: We can imagine a group of people in which all of them are pursuing several objectives, amongst which is the goal of «maximizing personal financial wealth». If this objective is particularly strongly pursued by one person in this group, this person will also radiate the corresponding frequency very intensively. Because of this the corresponding tuning bowls of the other people will be activated; their tuning bowls with the goal of «maximizing personal financial wealth» will also start to vibrate.

As we have already indicated many times, we are predisposed to selecting that objective as the guideline for making a decision which vibrates the most intensively. If – due to the external excitation of the objective of «maximizing personal financial wealth» - we now select this objective as a guideline for making our decisions, we have allowed ourselves to be influenced from the outside. All the people involved cannot normally perceive this activation directly, but only indirectly via the subconscious. The activation of a certain objective amongst the other group members is also not usually a conscious act by the person doing it. In retrospect perhaps individual people from the group will be astonished at their actually fairly untypical behaviour in the group.

Only goals which we already have can be activated externally.

With the complete illumination of only partially illuminated areas by spheres of the same colour as described earlier, the members of the group will have available additional abilities to achieve the objective of «maximizing personal financial wealth». Because of this the individual people will normally feel «confirmed» in their selection of their guideline.

How can we protect ourselves from such external influences? This is very easy – at least it is in theory: Using the mechanism discussed here only those of our goals which already exist within us can be activated. In this way no new objectives will be forced upon us, but rather just one or the other of *our own* goals will be placed in the forefront. In other words: If we don't have a tuning bowl of the corresponding frequency, then no tuning bowl can also be activated within us! The example given above with the tuning bowls only functions if the two tuning bowls have the same sound. Activation of a tuning bowl is only possible in the frequency of this tuning bowl.

The importance of this fact cannot be emphasized enough: The clearer the goals I set for myself the lower the chances of being

influenced by outside forces. If I pursue several incompatible goals then it is at best the priority within these different goals which may be changed by external influences.

The priorities of our life goals cannot be influenced if we only pursue one single life goal.

If for example I would like to reserve 98% of my energy for my development with respect to the basic rights of existence and the remaining 2% to be on the safe side for 10 other secondary goals, such as for example increasing my material wealth, improving my reputation etc., then I possibly have 11 different tuning bowls. Each of these tuning bowls can be activated externally and hence be moved into the foreground. This can lead to the fact that I eventually use a significantly lower portion of my energy for the development of my personal harmony. I cannot however lay the «blame» for this on my surroundings because with 10 associated goals I have left open the way for a change in my priorities.

He who wants to be sure that he will also really be able to reach his goal, should therefore strive for the lowest possible number of main goals – and best of all just one single one - and then rigorously pursue this main goal.

Whoever deliberately lives the basic rights of existence cannot be manipulated.

One frequently meets people who «really» would like to develop in line with the basic rights of existence and also in theory would like to assign a high priority to this goal, but alongside this they retain many other goals. They are possibly not really completely sure whether the living of the basic rights of existence is really the correct one for them. This often leads to the fact that these people allow the priorities of their objectives to be changed by external forces. Because of this they will naturally also not be able to get closer to their original goal. Without doubt a frustrating experience over time. In the end these people will lose their confidence in the objective they initially favoured and start to believe that living the basic rights of existence is not possible. They therefore end up in a vicious circle since they themselves then allocate yet again a lower priority to their main goal because of these doubts.

The fastest and most direct way of achieving personal harmony is therefore when this is the only goal. If we have no other goals within us which are incompatible with this goal, then no other goals can also be activated by external influences – quite simply because these other goals do not exist within us! For safety's sake we will point out once again at this point that the objective of living the basic rights of existence does not lead to lots of sacrifices, loneliness and sadness, quite the opposite – it leads to lasting harmony within us and to a great „joie de vivre". Whoever pursues this goal consciously and upon his own initiative will presumably change many of his personal attitudes to life over the course of time. This is however to his personal advantage since through this he will be calmer, more relaxed and happier.

Whoever finds that he is making no or only hesitant progress towards achieving his goals should test himself with complete honesty to see whether alongside these goals he isn't somehow «secretly» still clinging onto other goals.

We already saw earlier that with the objective of living the basic rights of existence in every situation, we can make our maximum contribution not only for ourselves but also for the general wellbeing, for nature etc. We therefore certainly do not need to have a guilty conscience if we devote 100% to this goal!

The seminar effect

The effect of the mutual activation of tuning bowls and the overlapping of similar-coloured spheres in a group of people as mentioned above can easily be observed in seminars: Many companies and organizations allow their staff - and in particular management staff – to participate in further training courses. It is always amazing that in such seminars moral and ethical aspects are also tackled with great vigour and plans for solving such aspects are drawn up. People resolve to do many things, but later in their daily life back at the workplace, they actually do not translate any of this or at least extremely little of it into action. External forces are very often cited with great regret as reasons for this, which had the effect that the discussed themes could not be implemented by the person concerned. This person naturally hopes that all the other participants in the seminar will not find themselves stuck with such unpleasant constraints.

Within a group tuning bowls which were previously hidden in individual people can be activated.

In actual fact and in truth one main reason for this behaviour is to a great extent to be found in the group which is no longer present: In the seminar, in the dynamic of the group situation, all the participants *want* to tackle a given theme. Other goals are subordinated into the background, the day-to-day business is left aside. Their tuning bowls, which correspond with the objectives, are activated and hence are brought to the foreground as guidelines for decisionmaking. As members of the group they also have additional abilities available and they also *want* to make use of these abilities. When back at the workplace, they allow themselves to be activated by other external tuning bowls and therefore again pursue other goals. Like a chameleon they adapt to their surroundings. Moreover it is possible that they lack some of the additional abilities of the group or they are no longer interested in making use of them due to the changed objective; they have «more important things» to do.

It is clear here that it is not possible to make external sources responsible for this. The only possible remedy here is *to want* to develop oneself further and to specify the objective for oneself. As long as someone does *not* personally wish to develop further in a given direction and also does *not* undertake real independent steps in this direction, seminars and consultations represent money thrown away or at best a welcome change from day-to-day life. They will certainly lack any effect.

It is important to note here that someone's personal development cannot be purchased for example through visiting a seminar or by reading a book. There is no «automatic» development with respect to the basic rights of existence – except simply having to do something personally towards it! It is relatively easy to be in harmony with oneself in a corresponding seminar or during a holiday by the sea for a given time. However in the final analysis, this is not about being in harmony for short periods, but always and in every situation. In other words especially too in our daily life, at work, on the journey home or within the family.

Our personal development depends only upon ourselves.

In earlier chapters we established that what we want in our lives is the development of personal awareness and to live the basic rights of existence in every situation.

Participation in seminars, reading books, consultation etc. can all under certain conditions provide efficient help towards development, or at least strengthen the internal longing for lasting harmony for a certain time. To this extent they can of course be very useful and helpful. However we can only develop ourselves. We can only increase our awareness sphere ourselves, we can only build our pyramid of personal development ourselves, this cannot be delegated or purchased.

Manipulation of other people

In one of the previous sections we discussed the mutual activation of tuning bowls. During this discussion we saw that the tuning bowls corresponding with our objectives vibrate and hence radiate energy at the corresponding frequency. In the case of other people who have a similar tuning bowl, this can lead to activation of this tuning bowl. Possibly because of this the other person thereby selects the corresponding objective as the guideline for his next decisions. This in turn poses the question as to whether individual people cannot be consciously manipulated by this means.

Could for example someone with a high awareness help other people unnoticed to select the basic rights of existence as their guideline for decisionmaking? Would it not be possible in this way to improve the whole world?

Everyone has the right to pursue those goals which he wants for himself.

The answer is a very clear NO. Because in doing this the person with the high awareness would be violating the basic rights of existence! It must again be particularly emphasized here that every being on the earth is given the right according to the basic rights of existence to pursue those goals, which he wants. When translated into the model with the tuning bowls this means that everyone can have those tuning bowls within him, which he himself wants, and he can cause them to vibrate. He must naturally however also bear the consequences. If we want to help someone unnoticed to achieve his own happiness then we violate

the basic rights of existence, we undermine our own foundation! In doing this we damage both ourselves as well as our surroundings.

«Help» is only really a help if it takes place with the full agreement of the affected person.

In the past many wars have been waged to force other people to change their ideology or their economic system to those of the aggressor or to force them to convert to a certain religion. Such aggressors were so strongly convinced of their own thinking that they saw themselves as being the only correct ones and wanted to force everyone else into this way. For this purpose even killing was legitimized or was declared to be valid by many religions. Unfortunately very little has changed in the present day in this area. Most wars are still carried out even today to «save» other people or to «develop» them – or to put it more clearly - to force them into a certain way of thinking or to «solve» a problem from the outside.

Help can only be of assistance if it is offered with the full agreement of the person concerned. «Help» without the consent of the affected person is nothing other than manipulation and violates the basic rights of existence in a flagrant way. This is by the way true not just for people but also in general for all beings[8].

We have referred above to war as a negative example. We don't however have to look so far away from ourselves at all: Manipulation often happens in the closest family circles. A huge number of interpersonal problems arise because someone «meant well» and did this or that for someone without being asked. In doing this the person undoubtedly wanted to do good and we don't want to deny this. For example parents of grown-up children try to procure better jobs for their children, or to correctly bring up their grandchildren by «making arrangements behind the scenes», or perhaps someone thinks that their partner is too fat and gives them a weight reducing diet etc.

For many people it is difficult to understand why a well-intentioned act can violate the basic rights of existence. In the chapter on subjectivity we have already seen that good and bad are purely subjective perceptions by an individual person. In this respect it will surely be clear that the basic rights of existence can be violated or retained with both good as well as badly-intended decisions. And a violation is and remains a violation. The reason for the violation is for the time being completely unimportant.

The basis for all development is the free will to select this development.

Every being has the right to do or not do what he wants. This even includes the right to live what appears in our eyes to be an unhappy life – every being can choose for himself!

The final consequence of this is that even the unasked giving of presents to another person is a violation of the basic rights of existence. In the handing over of a surprise present it would

[8] As the name already suggests, gene *manipulation*, or – expressed more accurately – the creation of genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) is also an example of this.

therefore be correct to ask: «I would like to give you some pleasure. May I give you this gift?» Then the person receiving the gift can decide whether he will accept the gift or not.

Nature will help us

From the discussion concerning human development and the awareness sphere, the transmitting of our objectives via the tuning bowls and mutual influencing within groups it is possible to come to the conclusion, that the objective of human existence is to bring light or awareness to the earth. In other words we human beings should be the rescuers or saviours of the earth! This however would be a somewhat incorrect conception:

Although we have previously almost exclusively only considered the development of human beings, the basic rights of existence are valid for all beings. In this we must use the term «being» in a very broad sense: Under this heading – apart from all living beings on the earth (humans, animals, plants) – we also include the earth itself, every stone, all the water, air etc. All other beings as well as humans are in a state of development. In the model of the sphere we can therefore also imagine *their* abilities with respect to living the basic rights of existence as white spheres around their bodies[9].

Also animals, plants, minerals and the earth itself have a certain awareness.

Every stone, every plant, every tree, every animal and every mountain is at a certain stage of development just like every person. All beings have a certain awareness which can be represented by a white light sphere around their physical bodies. The group dynamic discussed earlier (the abilities of a group are greater than the sum of all the abilities of its individual members and the mutual activation of objectives), which exists within a group of like-minded people, is therefore also possible within a group of different beings. Thus for example our own awareness sphere could overlap with that of a tree. In this way it is possible that as discussed earlier additional abilities would be available to us for living the basic rights of existence. We use this fact – in general unconsciously, in that for example we set out plants, stones and crystals in our home.

An intermediate question: Do you also have plants, crystals or stones in your home? Are they genuine or plastic? If for example plants really were only intended to be looked at, then you could set out plants made of plastic just as well. They look perfect, they bloom the whole year round, are long-lasting and easy to care for. Perhaps however with your intuition you have felt that special something about a real plant or a crystal and that is why you set it out in your home.

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[9] The same is also true for other objectives, these too can be represented by coloured spheres.

Nature, through its awareness, helps us to find our inner peace, harmony and joy.

For holidays most of us particularly like to go to the sea, to mountains or into a forest. In the open, healthy coutryside we can feel this harmony and we can especially feel the white awareness spheres of these beings. We are happy to let them overlap with our own awareness sphere. In these surroundings we therefore have the availability of additional intuitive abilities. On top of this these beings transmit a vibration corresponding with the living of the basic rights of existence as an objective which may frequently be capable of activating our own tuning bowl. It is not for nothing that we feel particularly good in a healthy natural setting!

He who personally wants to develop with respect to the basic rights of existence, can therefore have this objective activated in the unspoiled countryside so that this is more frequently selected as a guideline for decisionmaking. Since in this situation as a rule additional intuitive abilities are available to us, it is extremely sensible to make important decisions in a healthy natural setting.

The goal of our development is however to be able to make our decisions in accordance with the basic rights of existence *in every type of surrounding*. It would therefore make little sense to take leave of civilisation and move into the primeval forest as a recluse. This would mean that we were fleeing from our goal.

In summary then it is extremely presumptuous to believe that we humans were intended to develop nature or even to save it[10]. The opposite is true: Nature can help us human beings in our development and be an example to us! Insofar as we wish to develop ourselves further with respect to the basic rights of existence, we are setting ourselves the same goal as nature. Because of this we can profit from the group dynamic with other beings in nature as discussed above, and develop ourselves more quickly.

[10] If we respected the plants and animals as beings with the right to independent development, then for example any form of gene manipulation or animal testing – no matter for what purpose - would lose its legitimacy.

Success monitoring

In past chapters we have emphasized again and again how important it is to set your own personal goals for life. In addition of course it is also necessary to carry out regular checks on, or to monitor, whether we are also really getting closer to our goals. In the case of most companies for example objectives and budgets are set for one year and the achievement of these objectives is periodically reviewed, at least once each year. What has proved to be useful for companies can also be very helpful for us personally.

He who changes his life goal should also adapt the measures for assessing his progress.

The monitoring of our progress must thereby be adapted to the selected goals. We must be clear about *how* we want to measure our development, according to which criteria we wish to make the assessment of whether we have got closer to our goal. The goal and the respective assessment criteria for progress on the way to the goal belong closely together. If we have set ourselves the goal of learning to play the piano, then we can for example measure our progress by using pieces of music which we are able to play. Our body weight or the state of our savings account have little to do with this, and are hence unsuitable as assessment criteria for progress in piano playing. What appears so obvious in this example however often leads to difficulties and problems in our daily life.

We must be aware of the connection between objective and the assessment criteria for progress, above all when we *change* our personal objectives, when we give up old objectives and replace them with new ones. Often we change our objective but continue to assess our progress as before with the assessment criteria of the earlier – no longer valid - objective. If we don't notice this ourselves then after a short time we will start to follow the old objectives again. In the final analysis we do indeed want to make progress...

A great number of people in the western world pursue in the first instance financial goals. To be able to call a maximum of financial resources your own with a minimum of effort, is a widespread goal for life. It is not by chance that the press reports every day on the stockmarket prices, the financial successes of companies, profit options on financial investments etc. Such information is wanted by an ever-greater number of people. He who wants to maximize his financial wealth can as a result find easy assessment criteria for measuring progress and he can even monitor it daily!

If however a person now wants to change his objective for example from maximizing profit to living the basic rights of existence, this is of course certainly not to say that this person does not need to earn any more money. He will however set his priorities differently, as discussed in earlier chapters. The two objectives «have as much money as possible» and «living the

basic rights of existence» are not compatible with one another after a certain level of development.

In this concrete example the risk is however great that he will take the living of the basic rights of existence as the goal, but he also or only assesses his progress as before on the basis of his financial wealth. He thus still clings to the old goal and doesn't properly let it go. Instead he would like if possible both to be rich and to live the basic rights of existence. As we have seen in the chapter on objectives the striving for incompatible goals brings development to a complete standstill at a certain point[11]. Neither internal harmony nor financial wealth increase. From the point of view of the respective person himself this is quite possibly a clear step backwards against the earlier situation.

Personal characteristics which cannot be measured in terms of defined quantities, such as kilograms, dollars, euros, pounds, metres, degrees etc., are extremely difficult to quantify. Only very few of us have had practice in this. The following list is therefore intended to offer suggestions as to how we can assess our progress on the path to peace and harmony, to the highest human goal. This list can naturally also be extended arbitrarily. The sequence of points is purely random and in no way represents any form of value judgement.

- Joy in daily life: Can I say that I take pleasure more and more in the everyday things of life? Can I enjoy life more and more? Does my „joie de vivre" increase?
- Equanimity in every situation: Are there less and less things which can upset me? Do I get annoyed less and less? Do I calm down again more quickly after getting annoyed?
- Confidence: Is my confidence in myself and in my future increasing? Am I less and less afraid of things? Are there things or events of which I am still afraid?
- Harmony and peace: Do I more and more frequently stand above things? Do I remain calm internally and externally even in hectic situations, or under stress? Do I feel stressed less and less?
- Evaluation: Can I accept other people, things and events more and more the way they are without dividing them into good or bad?
- Self-determination: Do I do those things which I want to do wholeheartedly?

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[11] We demonstrated this before with the example of a mountain climber, who wanted to climb both peaks A and C from the mountain village. Since both peaks are on different sides of the valley he cannot get closer to both peaks at the same time. If he first climbs peak A he then has to go right back to the village before he can then climb peak C.

- Objective: Have I formulated my personal goals (short and long term) clearly to myself and in writing? Do I deliberately follow these goals? Do I check my progress regularly and honestly?
- Health: Am I bodily healthy and fit? Do I feel healthy and fit? Do I take care of my health?
- Intellectual fitness: Am I intellectually fit? Can I keep up with the new developments on the earth?
- State of relaxation: Do I feel relaxed and at ease – even if things are getting turbulent?
- Authenticity: Do I accept myself for what I am, with all my faults and problems, or do I make a pretence in certain situations, that I am someone else? Am I myself in every situation?
- Priority: Do I divide my time correctly according to the priorities I have set for my objectives?

To be able to deliberately pursue our own development, it is recommended that we establish in writing for each of the listed points those cases where there is a need for change:

- What things can I *not* be pleased about in my life?
- What do I get upset about?
- What do I fear or what do I worry about?
- In which situations do I feel stressed?
- etc.

From this list of negatives it should be possible to cross out certain entries over time. Within the course of personal development new points will however have to be added to the list. This is quite normal and should in no way have a demotivating effect. Quite the reverse: These are simply new challenges on our journey through life!

About missionary work

He who works on his own personal development, is as a rule convinced that this is the right way for him and that he is doing the right thing. Otherwise he would presumably do something else...

In many cases therefore sooner or later arises the desire to convince other people of his path. This person also wants to help others to find the «right» path. This often ends in great disappointment if the closest people such as his life partner, his children, parents, good friends etc. react negatively. Especially if they don't wish to know anything of the «only correct» way, the best path or goal.

The people closest to us have possibly noticed that we have changed. Frequently a change will initially however arouse only surprise and lots of resistance. Why couldn't you stay as you were? I also loved you before. – In general however our surroundings are merely the smallest problem.

Only freewill, self-wanted development brings progress.

Everything else is manipulation.

Notice for example how your children learn to walk upright or think back to your own childhood: Did your parents spend hours trying to persuade you of the advantages of walking upright over crawling? Or indeed did they send you to a seminar to learn how to walk upright? Hardly. You would simply have noticed other children or adults walking upright. And then at a certain point in time you decided that «walking upright will bring me advantages and I too would like to be able to do it». You began to practise this *of your own accord*. As long as a child does not wish to walk upright he crawls. The persuasiveness of the parents does not help here. The child decides for himself. This takes place in exactly the same way for learning to speak, toilet training etc.

Returning to our desire to bring others onto the «correct path». There is only one solution: If you want to convince others of the correctness of your own path or goal, in the first instance you must live your own life as you believe to be right. If by this means over a period of time you react harmoniously and calmly in every situation those surrounding you will certainly not fail to see this. People who feel the same longing within themselves and are on the search for the correct path will then attempt to do the same as you – each in his own way.

Our lives are about our own development and not the development of others.

If on the other hand we find that others do not wish to emulate us, do not wish to make our goal their goal, do not ask us for advice, do not want our help – then it may be our fault! Perhaps in our daily life we do not transmit the peace, harmony and calmness, which we ourselves believe or hope we do. Perhaps we are really living the basic rights of existence more in theory than in practice.

Whatever the reason we should naturally not become disheartened. Our life is about *our* development and not the development of others. We are only responsible for ourselves.

Nothing remains for us but to concern ourselves with ourselves, to invest our strengths in our own development and to accept others as they are.

We can make our greatest contribution to the general wellbeing on the earth if we develop ourselves personally to the maximum possible extent towards living the basic rights of existence and not in that we convince as many others as possible to pursue the same goal. It is all about our personal growth and not about that of others!

Time for change

We have so far considered the basic rights of existence on the earth as well as human development to a state of internal harmony and the consequences stemming from these considerations with respect to self-responsibility. At some stage the question arises as to *how* and *when* we could apply everything we have discussed to our personal life.

It is naturally the free choice of every person as to whether he would like to develop further towards living the basic rights of existence. If he should affirm that he does, it is again entirely his choice as to how and when and in what way he should start this process. The free choice of everyone is respected but every one of us is also responsible for the consequences of his decision.

For the majority of us it is time to break out of the negative spiral - it is «time for a personal change».

The developments in the rich industrial nations in recent years have without doubt resulted in many negative consequences for the environment and for the so-called developing countries. People in the economically developed countries today however have excellent opportunities as never before for progressing their personal development[12]. The times are almost ideal to make a change in our lifestyle, we could therefore speak about a real *Time for change*.

Why are the preconditions in the industrialized countries today so extremely good for us to personally develop further with respect to the basic rights of existence? We will list only some of the important reasons for the majority of inhabitants of the economically rich industrial nations:

- Our existential needs are more than covered. Never before has it been possible to spend such a short time of each day or week in satisfying our existential needs (and many other needs as well). The basic needs, which we briefly discussed during our consideration of the human needs hierarchy, are covered. There would thus be sufficient time available for us to further develop ourselves personally. We only need to apply ourselves with courage to use this time rigorously. We can do this for example by individually reducing our daily or weekly working hours.
- The increasing anonymity in our society creates many problems. On the other hand it does make it easier for someone to forge his own path. The pressure from our surroundings to conform to society just like everyone else has

[12] We are in no way suggesting here that the development in the past can be regarded as «good» or even as being a necessary precondition for personal development with respect to the basic rights of existence. We simply note that the preconditions for a change amongst people in the industrially-developed countries are today extremely good.

hence become significantly lower. It is easier today to go your own way.

- The large catchment net of social insurance is better than ever before. We therefore need to concern ourselves significantly less about securing our future: We can live in a more carefree way! This too creates space for further personal developments and considerations about life.
- The sensitivity of people to the great problems on the earth (for example environmental pollution, the distribution of food, unrest, epidemics etc.) is constantly increasing. This creates an increasing understanding of those people who want to travel other paths.

The time is therefore virtually ideal for a change of life. Naturally this cannot happen without limitations or without pain. Perhaps we will have to separate ourselves from some things, from objects, from people, and certainly from familiar ways of thinking. The reward that lures is the greatest of all goals for every single human being: Perpetual internal harmony. We would then of course perceive the environment, our fellow human beings and naturally ourselves too in a completely different light and be able to enjoy them.

Stumbling blocks

But why is it still only relatively few people who conscientiously work on the expansion of their awareness, who strive for perpetual harmony? Why do the majority of people hardly give any thought or even no thought at all to their life objectives?

If we were to be able to recognize the stumbling blocks it would often be easier to avoid or recognize them. We would therefore like to suggest some of the reasons why for many people their personal development with respect to the basic rights of existence simply remains just a good intention, or merely a thought, and is at best partially and often not at all converted into reality.

Hectic and pill mentality

A change in personality needs time. We have to change mechanisms which have become automatic over many years – this needs both energy and time. Our attitude to life today is shaped by rapid change, everything seems to change constantly and within a shorter and shorter time. That which doesn't show an immediate effect is therefore frequently forgotten in favour of other goals. Long term goals no longer seem to be attractive.

The predominant theme is that of economic development. This becomes more and more an end in itself, a spiral, which turns ever

faster. We become used to simply consuming, everything can (apparently) be purchased and becomes ever cheaper. What we would really like to do would be to buy pills which we could take over a period of time so that we could automatically develop with respect to the basic rights of existence.

As we have already mentioned in the preceeding chapter, thanks to industrialization and economic development, we should now have lots more time available for our personal development – however we use this available time in general for quite different things: We „devour“ television programmes, films, adventures, travel, sporting events or we «use» this time so that in the future we will have even more money available for consumption. For the majority of us it is therefore high time that we got out of this spiral – in other words it is «time for a change».

We have everything under control

The advances in science and technology have brought about an incredibly strong belief in the rationality of all events amongst many people. What cannot be explained scientifically is frequently not accepted, not spoken about or explained away by other means. In reverse this mentality has led in the case of certain people to everything being viewed as «esoteric» and controlled by the stars. Both attitudes are completely absurd. In our lives there are events which can be explained rationally as well as those which cannot be explained..

Those who deny those occurrences or characteristics in their lives which cannot be rationally explained, automatically shut themselves off from all considerations about the meaning of life, about the reason for and the objectives of our existence and that of other beings.

Those who want to develop personally with respect to the basic rights of existence, must therefore recognize, that there are things on the earth which we can explain and understand scientifically and there are also things on the earth which we (at least to the present day) cannot explain or understand. Both the parts of our world which can be explained as well as those which cannot be explained still have their legitimacy. Both parts are present whether we accept this or not.

Globalization and the mass media

The current idea of «globalization» would like to define the earth as one huge market which should be as uniform as possible. As the most important driving force behind this development, economics is constantly used to present this levelling process as a «natural» development or one which cannot be influenced. The mass media, which because of extensive privatization, has itself

become part of the economy, has ever more refined means of influencing its customers and normally joins in strongly with this process.

On the other hand many people are less and less critical of the reporting of such events. Whatever appears on the TV screen, is presented in the newspapers or in books is perceived as «the truth» instead of as subjective reporting by the authors or presenters. More and more people take their objectives and values from the press instead of thinking for themselves. The blame for this cannot of course be simply passed on to the media, but rather within the meaning of self-determination or self-responsibility everyone bears the responsibility of whether he will accept external values or objectives and if so, which ones.

Denial of reincarnation

Much false information has been spread around with respect to every aspect of the rebirth of human beings[13]. Whilst many people and institutions don't want to know anything about it, others interpret illnesses and accidents incorrectly as «God's punishment». This finally leads to a feeling of powerlessness, to a feeling that we ourselves cannot change anything or influence anything, in other words to exactly the opposite of self-determination and self-responsibility. Such people – or to put it better such victims – allow themselves to be influenced or even manipulated much more easily.

Those who realize that they will return to this earth at a later stage are much more ready to treat nature and its resources responsibly. A «don't care what happens after I've gone» mentality, in which little responsibility is perceived for those who come later, is totally foreign to such people. Those who know that they will be born again later so as to continue with their personal development at that place where they ended this life are much more prepared to go from step to step on the long path of personal development and to be pleased about every small success.

Whoever on the other hand sees his personal life as an absolute one-off event, is much more inclined to quickly lose the motivation for personal development in the case of failures and resistance. This is especially true with advancing years, when it becomes

[13] Earlier in this discourse we pointed out that neither the existence nor the non-existence of incarnation can be scientifically proven. Each person must decide this for himself with the help of his personal intuition.

If a person really cannot identify himself with reincarnation, he will perhaps accept as a transitional solution the idea that his own «ego» is bequeathed to coming generations. That his descendants inherit his remaining personal and other problems and sooner or later will have to solve them.

clear that the great goal in this life may no longer be achieved. If this is the only life and the goal cannot be achieved within it, why indeed should anyone really strive towards it?

Words are simpler than deeds

As logical and plausible as development with respect to the basic rights of existence may appear to be, its translation into the practicality of everyday life is not that easy. It is in fact a very serious and demanding undertaking, which demands considerable energy and cannot simply be achieved «on the side».

It is not that difficult to see *as an observer* what we or others should actually do in order to live the basic rights of existence in a given situation. However it is exactly what we *really should do* which is generally the main difficulty. The difficulty doesn't lie in the theory or in the strategy but in carrying it out in practice.

There is a significant number of people who are not sufficiently aware of this distinction. They believe that in themselves they wish to live the basic rights of existence, but in reality they merely talk about it. As we have seen in earlier sections advances in personal development are only possible by actually *implementing* the basic rights of existence *in our own lives*. Just talking about it does not produce any development whatsoever.

We should particularly remember this when we find ourselves wanting to help others with their development by offering good advice. It cannot therefore be repeated often enough: Our maximum personal contribution to the general wellbeing of everything on earth consists in our own personal development, in other words in our personal implementation of the basic rights of existence in our lives, how we ourselves live the basic rights of existence in every situation – and not in participating in discussions or offering advice to others!

Missing or incorrect success monitoring

In a separate chapter we have already referred to the need for the regular monitoring of our progress towards successfully achieving our objectives. Since the lack of this monitoring of our progress or the unsuitability of the decisionmaking criteria are frequently the stumbling blocks to living the basic rights of existence we would like to briefly come back to this point.

It is frequently insufficient to simply take the basic rights of existence as the objective for life. As a rule it is necessary – or at least it is very useful - to consider at the same time how we will assess our personal progress towards living the basic rights of existence. It is especially important to be clear that in letting go of the old objectives it is also important to let go of their assessment criteria.

The regular assessment of our progress should ensure that we also really do get closer to our goal. On the basis of this checking process we can also correct our behaviour if necessary. In making these assessments if we make use of criteria which are only suitable for another goal, then sooner or later we will approach the other goal. If we have incompatible objectives, we will therefore probably get further and further from our originally-selected goal.

Many people continue to try to realize their financial objectives simultaneously with living the basic rights of existence or to measure their success at least partially according to monetary criteria. Sooner or later this must lead to frustration.

Review

As multifaceted as we human beings may be, once our existential needs are covered, we all finally strive for the same thing: We want to be perpetually happy and satisfied and we want to be able to live our lives without worries and cares. This search for harmony and inner peace, for self-realization, or however we like to describe this state, as our top objective in life, is practically the same in all the different methods of representing human needs. Not least the advertising industry also frequently attempts to make use of this striving for happiness and harmony.

From our experience we know that wherever we are or whatever we do certain rules prevail. On the roads these are the traffic regulations, in football the rules of play, in nature there are the natural laws. For those that respect these rules the corresponding activities or deeds are easier to accomplish than for those who violate these rules and therefore have to be reprimanded in one way or another.

We have got to know the most important rule on the earth which all the earth's inhabitants must follow. This rule says: «Every being has an equal right to live here, to develop here and to carry out his tasks here». Because of their importance for everything on the earth we call this rule the *basic rights of existence*. On the basis of several examples and comparisons from our everyday life, we have seen that harmony and peace can only come into our lives if we respect this foundation of existence, if we try to respect the foundation of existence automatically in all the decisions we make.

The more resolutely and single-mindedly a person follows these rules in all his decisionmaking, the closer he gets to his goal of internal peace and harmony. From this point of view our life is nothing other than a training camp for the acquisition of the missing characteristics and abilities which we require for perpetually respecting the basic rights of existence, the most important rule in life.

Our subconscious helps us with subjective perception (glasses model), the activation of our objectives (tuning bowl model) and additional mechanisms permit us to interpret things such that we can efficiently train for the abovementioned goals. We develop our awareness and accept the full responsibility for our life (self-responsibility). This is our personal path to harmony and inner peace.

We have discussed these processes in detail and thereby we have emphasized again and again the importance of setting clear goals and of the deliberate monitoring of our success in achieving or approaching these goals in our lives. It is only in this way that we can be sure that we are pursuing our own goals and are not suddenly pursuing externally-set goals.

The objective of respecting the basic rights of existence represents for most human beings a far-reaching change in their system of personal values. It is only now - at this present time - that the preconditions are the optimum ones for making a change in our system of personal values. In the final analysis it is the responsibility of each individual personally to translate these ideas into action.

He who pursues as the topmost goal in his life the deliberate respecting of the basic rights of existence, also automatically makes his maximum possible contribution to the general wellbeing.

Finally I would like to wish you complete clarity and strength for your self-chosen path in life from the bottom of my heart. Never ever forget: *You yourself* can *decide*, no one can force you into anything.

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